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EGYPTIAN DEBT.



MISSION

OF THE

RIGHT HON. G. J. GOSCHEN, M.P.



LONDON:
COUNCIL OF FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS,
COUNCILHOUSE, No. 17, MOORGATE STREET.
DECEMBER, 1876.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The decree of the 18th of November having been drawn up in French, and no authentic translation having been sent to this country, I have caused a translation to be made for the convenience of English bondholders, and have availed myself of the opportunity to append some explanatory notes. It has also been considered expedient to republish the statement I made on the 28th November. In that speech I had to travel over so much ground, that I was unable to deal adequately with every point. I am glad, therefore, to have an opportunity to add some explanations and observations.

I stated clearly and fully in my speech the evidence on which the estimate of revenue which formed the basis of our plan, was founded. Everyone must judge for himself to what extent conclusions based on that evidence may be considered trustworthy. While I am prepared to say that the evidence was such as in my judgment not to justify a demand for further sacrifices on the part of the creditors, it is of course impossible for me to prove that those revenues are correctly given, or to guarantee either the solvency or the good faith of the Egyptian Government. The main arguments used in favour of the view that the revenues must be less than those which have been assumed, are three. It is said, firstly, that a revenue of £10,500,000 for a country like Egypt seems excessive; secondly, that if such a revenue existed, it is incredible that the Government should have found themselves in the midst of such great financial difficulty; thirdly, that the non-payment of revenue to the Commissioners of the Public Debt since May last, is good *prima facie* evidence that the revenue is inadequate. I offer the following counter-suggestions:—

An analysis of the sum of £10,500,000, at which, in round numbers, the revenue of Egypt is officially estimated, shows that a considerable portion is not taxation in the ordinary sense. It includes the receipts of the railways, which are in no sense taxation; also the local revenues of several municipalities and townships in part representing payment for services performed, and embracing few items of general taxation; further, harbour and canal dues and dues of other kinds, which are also entirely local in their nature; also, the repayment of debt* and an advance on future taxes†—which latter item must be considered rather in the nature of a loan than of a tax. The following is a rough analysis showing the facts of the case for 1875, in which year the revenue reached £10,800,000.

Direct Taxes ;—

On Land	... ..	£4,302,400	
On Date Trees	... ..	189,300	
Licences on Professions, &c. (Contributions d'arts et de metiers)		422,000	
			£4,913,700

Indirect Taxes :—

Customs	... ..	£639,000	
Tobacco Monopoly	... ..	263,900	
			902,900

Revenues of Government :—

From Salt Works (Salines)...	... ..	£306,000	
Farming of Fisheries	... ..	131,800	
(Fermage du poisson frais, et Matarieh—(poisson salé)			
			437,800

* The repayment of advances made to certain localities by the Government.

† The Moukabala.

Sundry Taxes and Revenues in the	
Provinces (Moudiriehs)	504,900
Revenues of the Province of Soudan	143,500
Sundries	34,000
Total General Taxation ...	£6,936,800
Local Revenues, Taxes, and Dues :—	
Municipalities, Cairo & Alexandria	517,800
Gouvernorats (Governorships of small towns) and Police Receipts ...	202,400
Canal, Bridge, Port, and other Dues and Tolls	165,600
	885,800
Railways	990,200
	<hr/> 1,876,000
Amount received in anticipation of future Land Tax (Moukabala)	1,613,600
Repayments of advances made by Government and arrears ...	377,700
	<hr/> 1,991,300
	<hr/> * £10,804,100

In some of the statements prepared to show the great weight of taxation on Egypt, the amount of interest on the Daira loans is included. When the interest on the Daira loans was made a liability of the State, it may have been fair to include it in the burdens of the State, as the State would have had to pay if the Daira failed to supply the funds; but as the Daira loans are withdrawn from the unified debt, and as the interest on the Daira loans has to come from the produce, the cotton and sugar, grown on

* A certain portion of these taxes ranged under the heads of municipal and local taxation may be raised for the purposes of the General Government. On the other hand, a portion of the revenues in the provinces classed under general taxation is raised for local purposes. The above analysis is not intended to do more than to give a general idea.

landed estates, that interest can surely in no sense be considered as a tax upon Egypt, nor be added to the amounts which Egyptian taxpayers have to pay abroad. In estimating the amount of taxes which Egypt could afford to pay, it must not be forgotten that a large portion of the land yields two crops in a year; but I am not concerned to show that the taxation of Egypt is not very heavy. I am glad to think that, in the year 1886, the land which is now annually paying in land-tax nearly £3,900,000, and in advance of future land-tax about £1,650,000, in all, £5,550,000, will, if the Viceroy keeps his promises to the owners of land, not have to pay more than £2,700,000.*

In forecasting the future position of Egypt, this ultimate relief ought not to be lost sight of.

With regard to the second argument, which assumes that if the revenues have been as has been stated, the financial embarrassments of the Egyptian Government are incomprehensible, the great works, productive and unproductive, undertaken and carried through by the Viceroy through means of loans, raised in many cases at exorbitant interest, ought not to be forgotten.† Besides it should be remem-

* It was somewhat remarkable as bearing on the question of the over-taxation of Egypt, that, though before the law of the Moukabala was passed, the taxes on land amounted to 5 millions, the land-owners were willing, and considered themselves able, to take upon themselves the advance of half the land tax of future years under the law of the Moukabala. Valuable privileges were conceded to them by this law in respect to acquiring titles to their land, so that there was a strong inducement to accept the terms of that arrangement; but the inference, at all events, seems legitimate, that at that time it was thought that, notwithstanding the heavy amount of the land-tax, the additional burden assumed by the land under the law of the Moukabala could be borne.

† Mr. Cavo says in his report, page 1, "Immense sums are expended on unproductive works, after the manner of the East, and on productive works carried on in a wrong way or too soon. . . . The Khedive has evidently attempted to carry out with a limited revenue in the course of a few years, works which ought to be spread over a far longer period, and which would tax the resources of much richer exchequers."

bered that before the decree of the 7th May, the various sinking funds of the funded loans constituted a very heavy item, in addition to the interest.

The total annuities, including interest and sinking fund, on the short			
loans amounted to	...	...	£1,246,686
On the loan of 1862...	...	...	263,972
„ 1868...	...	...	953,303
„ 1873...	...	...	2,565,670
Total			£5,029,631

And this sum did not include any payment whatever for interest, commission, or repayment of capital on any floating debt.

An examination of the past transactions of the Egyptian Government shows that their embarrassments have arisen in great part from the creation of the floating debt which, till the Viceroy suspended payments, had to be renewed at very heavy cost. The Viceroy's position since last November has been that, owing to his credit breaking down, and to the consequent impossibility of renewing the bonds which fell due, he was called upon to find capital for paying them off. That capital he could not find, or, at all events, only on absolutely ruinous terms. These considerations are simply put forward for what they are worth, with a view of showing that the late embarrassments can be accounted for through other causes, and are not incompatible with the existence of a considerable annual revenue.

Thirdly: it is said that the non-payment of revenue to the Commissioners of the debt since May last, indicates the distressed condition of the country. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that the Commission did not begin to work in May, but only in July, and further that taxes in Egypt are not collected at fixed dates, the Govern-

legitimate taxes, the fellahs could afford to pay them, and that if extortion should cease they would willingly pay what was due. On the other hand, doubts have certainly also been expressed as to whether collectors acting under the orders of a European would be able to collect the large amount of legal imposts. It is certainly possible that in this respect there may be some diminution, against which, however, must be set the additional amount to be derived from land which will still come under cultivation, and for which no allowance has been made, till the year 1886, in the Government estimates.* On the other hand it appears certain that a thorough European administration of the indirect taxes, which will put an end to much disorder, will materially increase the yield of those imposts. The post office was not long since placed under the superintendence of an intelligent and able English official. It used to yield a loss; it now yields a considerable profit. An Englishman of administrative experience was placed a few weeks ago, by the Viceroy, at the head of the customs, and the salt and tobacco revenues were also put under his charge. The Viceroy has given him the fullest powers to reorganize, and to name his own staff. I had some conversation with this gentleman, and he assured me that the inspection of the administration which he had already made had convinced him of the large increase which reforms would produce in revenue from this source.† Indeed,

* Mr. Cave's report states, page 5: "352350 feddans have also been brought under cultivation and will shortly be assessed for taxation. As this will be effected gradually, no immediate increase of revenue will take place, but an addition of £180,000 a year from this source may be expected in the course of the next five years. A further area of 267,650 feddans will become liable to taxation after it has been surveyed, from which an additional £140,000 a year may be expected."

† Mr. Cave gives an illustration in his report in the following paragraph "According to a calculation made from the imperfect data accessible to the public, it has been estimated by a high independent authority that the receipts from the Customs House of Alexandria alone for the year 1872, ought

his estimate of the probable increase was so great that I hesitate to produce it. In the same way it is possible that the cost of working the railways will be reduced. Very considerable saving was shown to me to be possible in the item of coals alone. On the one hand, therefore, it would appear that under reformed administration it is possible that there may be some falling off in the taxes paid by the poorer class of cultivators, but that, on the other hand, it is almost certain that an increase of revenue will take place in all the revenues placed under European control not only as regards collection but also actual European management. I stated in my speech the insuperable objections which I felt to a reduction of interest while the accounts of the Government showed that no such reduction was necessary. A few years will show, when the Controllers-General and the other Europeans appointed have thoroughly got to their work, what the revenues of Egypt will be under improved administration. If evidence should then be forthcoming which is wanting now that the burden to be borne by Egypt under the new arrangements are heavier than the country could bear, measures could be taken

to have amounted to £558,727, whereas the return of receipts from all the ports reached only £541,215, or £17,512 less than it ought to have been from Alexandria alone."

Also on page 6: "The Customs duties may also be expected to improve. There has been a steady and gradual increase of the exports of cotton, which have risen from 1,253,593 quintals in 1867, to 2,615,120 quintals in 1874."

"In the general returns of exports and imports there is also a marked improvement."

Also: "These statistics show that the country has made great progress in every way under its present ruler; but, notwithstanding that progress, its present financial position is, for the reasons that have already been stated, very critical. Still, the expenditure would not of itself have produced the present crisis, which may be attributed almost entirely to the ruinous conditions of loans raised for pressing requirements, due in some cases to causes over which the Khedive had little control."

accordingly, but I see no reason for believing that this will be the result.

I turn to the question as to the annual financial requirements of the Government for expenditure. Some confusion appears to have arisen by mixing up with regard to the past the ordinary expenditure of the Government and their expenditure for public works. Surely it is not too much to expect that extraordinary expenditure should now be almost closed until the finances of Egypt have been somewhat relieved. The amount of £4,500,000 bargained for by the Government contains a considerable item for unforeseen expenses; the remainder is based upon past requirements. Mr. Cave states, "The permanent charges of the budget are:—

Tribute to Constantinople	£685,308
Interest on Suez Canal	198,829
Administration (including Civil List of His Highness and family)	3,067,560
	3,951,697
Say	£4,000,000."

Mr. Cave's report contains the particulars of the estimated expenditure.

It is important to observe that the amount includes the tribute to Constantinople and the interest for the Suez Canal. The requirements of the Government were carefully examined in concert with the Egyptian Government, both by Mr. Wilson and by Monsieur Villet. I have heard, I may add, from a still higher authority that Egypt can be governed for a smaller sum. I have much stronger opinions on the subject of the expenditure than on that of the revenue. With regard to the expenditure, I have no hesitation in stating my opinion that it would be unpardonable to exact further or more permanent sacrifices from the creditors

in order to allow of a higher budget of expenditure than £4,500,000.

The course we have adopted is as follows: We have exacted sacrifices from the creditors, but we have exacted them in order to reduce the Egyptian debt, thereby at once giving relief to Egypt and strengthening the chances of the creditors receiving the interest to which they are entitled.

The extent to which the debt may be reduced according to the final arrangement with the Government depends in part upon the elasticity of the revenue. It is absolutely fixed that one-seventh of the interest payable on the unified debt will, for the next nine years, be devoted to paying off and cancelling stock. It is further absolutely fixed that the annuities on the short loans shall be paid out of the produce of the Moukabala till they are completely paid off. The remainder of the Moukabala is also to be devoted to paying off unified debt unless the amount necessary to defray the interest on the debt, and the expenses of the administration as fixed in the decree should together exceed the revenue of the year. In such a case the balance would be taken from the sum available from the Moukabala after the annuities on the short loans have been paid. On the other hand, if the revenues exceed the necessary charge for the unified debt and the expenses as fixed in the decree, this surplus, as well as the available proceeds of the Moukabala and the one per cent. retained on the unified debt, is to be devoted to paying off debt.

According to the figures of the Government, the unified debt would be reduced in the year 1886, when the Moukabala ceases, and when the land-tax is reduced, to about £41,350,000. If our inferences are right that certain items of revenue were omitted in the Government accounts, the

diminution would be larger, but taking the Government figures, the result in 1886 would be as follows :

7 per cent. Interest and sinking fund on	
the unified debt of £41,350,000, about	2,900,000
5 per cent. Interest and sinking fund on	
the privileged debt	885,000

Together £3,785,000

Expenses of the Government 4,500,000

Together £8,285,000

against the £8,500,000 revenue which, as the Khedive stated to the Chambers of Notables may be expected to be the revenue in 1886.* The Government figures make no allowance for any annual increment whatever, either by new lands being taken into cultivation, or by improved administration in the indirect taxes, or by the ordinary progress of revenue, during the next nine years. They do not take any such amount into account till the year 1886.

The financial bearings of the plan which has been accepted cannot be thoroughly appreciated without a clear distinction being drawn between the charge retained for interest under the new decree, and the amount applied to the reduction of debt. In this respect it will be seen how greatly it varies from the plan embodied in the decree of the 7th May. That decree enacted a unified debt of £91,000,000 with an interest of 7 per cent., and a small allowance for a sinking fund sufficient to redeem the debt in sixty-five years. From the annuity necessary for this debt the amount paid to the Daira should be deducted. The remaining sum which was a *permanent* charge was about £5,800,000. If we look forward to the year 1886, and compare the two plans, it will be seen that

* Mr. Cave puts the probable revenue in 1886 and the following years at £8,473,000—page 10.

under the first decree Egypt would have had to pay £5,800,000, as compared with £3,785,000, under the new decree. A comparison of the first three or four years while the short loans are being paid off, is not a fair comparison. The scheme has not been framed simply with reference to the next few years. Nevertheless, during those first few years the following sacrifices are made by the Creditors.

Firstly. The difference between 5 per cent.
and 7 per cent. upon £15,000,000 Pre-
ference Stock, amounts to £300,000

Secondly. The reduction in the bonus to the
floating debt of the State, amounting to
£3,400,000, saves the annual charge of
7 per cent. on that amount, viz. : ... 238,000

Thirdly. 1 per cent. on £59,000,000 unified
debt (*i.e.* the amount retained for paying
off debt), amounts to 590,000

Total annual sacrifice £1,128,000

This is the annual amount which the creditors surrender to the Egyptian Government. The saving of £300,000 a year on the railways, and of the £238,000 of the bonus are permanent. The remainder is surrendered for nine years. The sacrifice of the 20 per cent. on the repayment of the short loans amounting to £800,000 capital, is not included in the above calculation.

The payments for the short loans will cease in the year 1882. They amount to about £1,050,000 for the years 1877, 1878, and 1879,

In 1880 to	...	...	...	...	£768,000
„ 1881 „	...	...	...	...	294,000
„ 1882 „	...	...	...	...	210,000

It will be seen how greatly the burden decreases progressively. A further alleviation to the Egyptian Government is

this, that the charge of the unified debt decreases annually through the annual cancelling of stock. It is by a gradual and progressive reduction the annual charge for the unified debt may be expected to decrease from £4,170,000 in 1877, to £2,900,000 in 1886.

The key, as I have said elsewhere, to the whole scheme is, the application of a considerable amount of revenue, increased by sacrifices made by the Creditors, to the reduction of debt. A large proportion of the total burden is applied to this purpose, and this circumstance has a very important bearing on the question as to the degree of certainty which the Creditors will have to receive their annual interest.

I do not wish to indicate any distrust of the figures on which we have agreed with the Government, but in answer to views that Egypt cannot afford to pay, I venture to point out that, after making allowance for the payment of the short loans, there will be very large fund available for the paying off of debt, but which, in the case of a break-down, might suffer before the creditors would be deprived of their interest.

The arrangements which have been made, distribute the payments of the Egyptian Government over the year instead of consolidating them, as was done under the decree of the 7th May, on two dates, the 15th of January and the 15th July. Under the new arrangements 3 per cent. will be due to the holders of the unified loan on the 15th January, and 3 per cent. on the 15th July, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to the holders of the privileged debt of £17,000,000 on the 15th April, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the 15th October. The annuities on the short loans will be distributed over six different dates. This, it is believed, will facilitate the financial arrangements of the Egyptian Government.

Having made the foregoing observations on the probable receipts and expenditure of the Egyptian Government, and on the bearing of the late decree as regards the finances of

Egypt, I wish to add a few words with regard to the guarantees which have been taken for the fulfilment of the engagement to which the Viceroy is pledged. These guarantees are supplemental to those which were taken in the decree of the 7th of May, and must be read together with the enactments of that decree. The Creditors will be able to look to the European Controllers-General and to the European Administrators of the railways who have been newly created under the recent decree. They have further to look to the Commission of the Public Debt created under the decree of the 7th May, and strengthened by several clauses of the recent decree, and they have also to look to the action of the International Tribunals. The attitude taken up by the Viceroy with regard to the great Powers in these arrangements must not be overlooked. In the institution of the International Tribunals he solemnly appealed to the great Powers to designate judges. They have done so; and these International Tribunals have obtained a position of great power, which, notwithstanding some embarrassing circumstances, has not failed to make itself felt in Egypt. Nubar Pasha rendered an immense service both to his own country, and to the Europeans connected with that country, in the part which he took in this great reform. The Commissioners of the Public Debt, all of whom, except the English Commissioner now to be appointed, have been designated to the Viceroy by the great Powers, have the power to bring before these Tribunals breaches of faith, and to summon even the Minister of Finance, and, of course, the Controllers-General themselves, and this would be no empty form. Indeed the Commissioners had summoned the late Minister of Finance before the Tribunals, a few days before his fall. The Commissioners of the Public Debt have the simple but most important function of seeing that the revenues pledged to the creditors are paid in to them. They hold these funds for the creditors as they are paid in, and are

to remit them forthwith to the Bank of England and to the Bank of France. The difficulty under which they laboured since they entered on their functions in July, was that they could not obtain sufficient evidence of the taxes having been paid. They could observe a deficiency, but they could not follow the funds through the various channels. The appointment of the two Controllers-General will, it is hoped, meet this and other difficulties. The Controller-General of receipts is to have the power of appointing the collectors throughout every branch of revenue, and the arrangements thus provide that from the moment when the taxes pledged to the creditors are paid in till they reach the Bank of England, they remain under European management, or at least subject to European vigilance and control. If the Controllers do their duty, breaches of faith will have to be committed, not in secret, but in the light of day. The Controllers are put under no authority except that of the Viceroy himself, and it is hoped that the stipulations are at all events such, that unless the Viceroy chooses openly to defy public opinion and the Powers who on his own demand have appointed Commissioners and Judges of the International Tribunals, irregularities at least ought not to take place. An absolute ruler can, of course, break decrees, and extraordinary circumstances may render their execution sometimes impossible; but I venture to think that, when the new organization is in force, it will be absolutely impossible for such transactions as have lately taken place to recur, or, that, if they should recur, they will at once be brought to light, and bring matters to a crisis.

In the decree of the 7th May, stipulations were inserted to provide against fresh borrowing on the part of the Viceroy, except under certain defined conditions, to be referred to the Commissioners of the Debt. These stipulations remain in force, but a further guarantee is taken in the

article in the new decree, which provides that all contracts containing pecuniary engagements, which would exceed one-twelfth of the credits open for the year, or which would be applicable for several years, require, in the first instance, the approval of the Finance Committee, composed of the Finance Minister and the two Controllers-General.

The Controller-General of Audit and Public Accounts is to be charged with the special duty of seeing to the execution of all the regulations affecting the Debts of the State.

I do not wish to exaggerate the binding nature of these securities. I am perfectly aware that all these regulations may be broken through by an arbitrary act, but that arbitrary act will have to be performed as an overt act in defiance of public opinion and of the Powers whom the Viceroy has summoned to assist him in carrying out these reforms.

In conclusion, I would wish to add that while I fully admit that those who question the ability and the inclination of the Egyptian Government to meet their liabilities, may feel it their imperative duty to impress on the public the dangers besetting Egyptian finance, and while I entirely recognize the propriety of their doing so, I cannot but think that it would be a matter of great regret if the Khedive should be led to believe that public opinion would not rigorously expect a full and faithful execution on his part of the engagements to which he is solemnly pledged; or that he should be unduly discouraged in the hard and undoubtedly trying task of retrieving his position, under conditions and restrictions naturally repugnant to an oriental prince. The strength of public opinion on the subject of Egyptian finance was of incalculable use to us in our negotiations, and in the public opinion of Europe, to which the present Ruler of Egypt is too intelligent a man to be insensible, I look for one of the guarantees for the maintenance of the arrangements we have made.

GEORGE J. GOSCHEN.

London, 15th December, 1876.

NOTE.

The following are the respective positions of the holders of the various Loans under the decree of the 18th November, as compared with their positions under the decrees of the 7th May:—

Loans of 1864, 1865-1866 and 1867.

Under the decree of the 7th May they were to receive a bonus of 5 per cent. in new Stock, and were then to be merged in the general Unified Debt, redeemable in 65 years.

Under the decree of the 18th November they are to be redeemed, with only a postponement of six months, at the dates of their original contracts, but at 80 instead of 100. They will be entitled to all arrears of interest. A special resource, the Moukabala, is set aside as security for their payment.

The amount of the Moukabala is about £1,650,000 per annum. The annuities of the Short Loans are as follows:—

1877	...	...	...	...	£1,060,000
1878	...	...	...	...	1,047,000
1879	...	...	...	...	1,032,000
1880	...	...	...	...	768,000
1881	...	...	...	...	294,000
1882	...	...	...	...	210,000

Loans of 1862, 1868, and 1873.

Under the decree of the 7th May these loans were simply merged in the general Unified Debt.

Under the new decree nearly two-fifths (the exact proportion is 38.40) are, at the option of the holders, to be converted into a 5 per cent. Preference Stock, secured, first on the railways, and in the next place on the general revenues, as a first charge, thus having priority over the Unified Debt. The total outstanding of these loans is £44,250,000. Of this amount £17,000,000 will be converted into Preference Stock

and £27,250,000 into Unified Stock. Notice will soon be given of the steps to be taken by holders for the conversion.

The Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris, an establishment of very high standing in Paris, was charged under the arrangements of 7th May with carrying out the conversion. The conversion has already taken place up to a certain point. The Viceroy has charged the Comptoir d'Escompte to conclude the operation which it commenced, and I understand that an advertisement giving minute directions to the holders of the various loans, as to what course they are to take, will be issued very shortly. I understand that the Comptoir d'Escompte is at present prepared to pay the interest on the loans of 1862, 1868 and 1873, included in the conversion, up to the 15th July, on the bonds being deposited for conversion. The receipts given for the stock deposited specify to what loan such stock belongs, and the holders of such receipts will be as much entitled to their proportion of preference stock as if they still held the bonds themselves. For each £100 of these loans deposited, the holders will be entitled to 38·40, or £38 8s. of the Preference Stock, and 61·60, or £61 12s. of the Unified Stock. I am assured that no difficulty will arise as to fractions, but that facilities will be given for their negotiation.

The notes to the different clauses of the decree will show the position in which the holders of the various loans will find themselves, as regards coupons and arrears of coupons.

Alexandria, 18th November; 1876.

DECREE.

We, the Khedive of Egypt,

Considering that the Decree of the 7th of May, 1876, relating to the unification of the Debts of the State and of the Daira requires certain modifications in its application ;

Considering the Decree of the 2nd of May, 1876, establishing the Treasury of the Public Debt, and desiring to strengthen still further the functions of the Commissioners who administer the said Treasury ;

Considering that the suppression of the Law of the Moukabalah raises unanimous objections on the part of those whom it affects, and that the Chamber of Delegates has given expression to the desire that the law should be maintained ;

In our firm desire to assure the regular course of the public services, while at the same time protecting the interests of the creditors by more efficacious guarantees ;

And having heard our Privy Council,

WE HAVE DECREED AND DECREE:

FIRST DIVISION.

Finances.

ARTICLE 1.

The Debts of the Daira as set forth in the Tables A and B inserted in the present Decree are separated from the Debts of the State, and are not included in the unification of the General Public Debt. These Debts will form the subject of a special arrangement.

ARTICLE 2.

The law of the Moukabalah is re-established, and is considered as never having ceased to be in force. Nevertheless, the annual reductions produced by the effect of the law of the Moukabalah will not come into force until the commencement of the year 1886, and an annual interest of 5 per cent. will be credited to the contributaries up to the end of the year 1885 on the sums which should be deducted.*

* The meaning of this paragraph is as follows:—Under the original law of the Moukabalah, an amount equal to $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the advances made in each year, in respect of the redemption of the land tax, was annually deducted. For instance, if the total paid under the Moukabalah in a year were £1,650,000, then £137,500 would be deducted from the land tax, the theory being that this deduction represented interest on the advance. By the decree of the 7th May, the whole of the law of the Moukabalah was suspended. The owners of land, however, objected in the strongest manner, and by the present decree the Moukabalah is restored, but the Decree in restoring it suspends the gradual reduction, and the whole of the reduction is to come in force at once in the year 1886. Interest at 5 per cent. is to be credited in the meantime to those who would have been entitled to the earlier reduction. This change emanated from the Egyptian Government itself. The negotiators declined any responsibility with regard to it.

The whole sum produced by the Moukabalah will be applied to the redemption of the Loans of 1864, 1865, and 1867, and of the unified debt.

In the employment of the available (*disponibles*) funds yielded by the Moukabalah, certain reservations are made which are dealt with in Article 6 relating to "amortization."

ARTICLE 3.

A special administration of the railways and of the port of Alexandria is established, which will be placed under the direction of a Commission, as will be set forth hereafter.

The revenues of the railways and of the port of Alexandria will be directly applied to the payment of the interest and the sinking fund of a series of Preference Bonds having a special mortgage on the railways and the port of Alexandria, amounting to seventeen millions sterling*, and bearing interest at

* The original proposal was to issue £15,000,000 on the Railways. The sum necessary to pay Interest and Sinking Fund on that amount was about £780,000. The net revenues of the Railway for the year 1875 were £990,000. They were inserted at that figure in the Budget of 1876, they are also put at that figure in the Budget of 1877. Possibly they may not reach that amount in the coming year, if it be true that a larger sum than usual will have to be devoted to ordinary repairs. On the other hand, the improvement in administration will certainly tend to diminish some of the working expenses.

The sum of £2,000,000 has been added to the Preference Stock in respect of the port of Alexandria. This involves an additional charge of about £105,000 (including Sinking Fund). The revenues of the port pledged as a security are estimated by the Government as likely to exceed £130,000. They are not yet definitely organized. Negotiations are in progress for settling the tariff. The harbour dues themselves have already been regularly collected.

In case the receipts of the railway and the port should not reach the amount necessary for paying the interest and sinking fund on the Preference Stock, the balance must be supplied from the General Revenues of Egypt, paid over to the Commissioners of the Public Debt. This balance is to form a first charge on the funds in their hands, so that these bonds may in every sense be considered a Preference Stock.

5 per cent., redeemable in sixty-five years.* Interest to run from the 15th of October, 1876.

These Bonds will be offered by preference to the holders of the Loans of 1862, 1868, and 1873, in exchange for Bonds of these Loans bearing 7 per cent., which Bonds will be cancelled.**

The annuity necessary for the service (Interest and Sinking Fund) of the Preference 5 per cent. Bonds, amounting to £885,744, and payable in two half-yearly payments of £442,872 each, will form the first charge on the Revenues of the Railways and of the port of Alexandria, and will remain, in every eventuality, the first liability of the Commission of the Public Debt.

ARTICLE 4.

The Loans of 1864, 1865, and 1867 are deducted from the unified Debt.***

* The additional amount allowed for the sinking fund, viz., £35,744, has been calculated on the basis of paying off the capital sum of £17,000,000, bearing 5 per cent. interest in 65 years by half-yearly drawings at par.

** The Stock is to be offered in preference to the holders of the Loans of 1862, 1868, and 1873. The total amount of these Loans outstanding is in all £44,250,000. The proportion, therefore, to which every holder of such Stock will be entitled, will be as £17,000,000 are to £44,250,000 = 38·40 per cent. Every holder will therefore be entitled to receive 38·40 per cent in Preference Stock, and 61·60 in the Ordinary Unified Stock. The precise mode of effecting this conversion, including the question as to how long the option to take Preference Stock should be left open to those entitled to it, is still under consideration. (The wish to be able to state the precise mode in which this point would be settled has delayed the publication of these notes.) The interest on the old Loans will have to be settled up to the 15th of October. Holders of the 1862 Loans should receive interest from the first of March to the 15th October; of the 1868 Loan, from the 15th January to the 15th October; of the 1873 Loan, from the 15th April to the 15th October. Those who have already converted have received their interest up to the 15th July, and they would naturally be entitled only to the difference between the 15th July and 15th October.

*** The holders of these Loans will be entitled to the back interest at the original rates. Those who have converted and

They will continue to bear the interest appertaining to them until their complete redemption.

They will be redeemed within the terms of their respective contracts. They will be redeemed, however, at the rate of 80 instead of at 100 per cent., and the first half-yearly payment on account of this redemption will be postponed by six months; that is to say, it will take place for the Loan of 1864, on the 1st of April, 1877, for the Loan of 1865, on the 7th of July, 1877, and for the Loan of 1867 on the 22nd of May, 1877.

ARTICLE 5.

The Bonus of 25 per cent., granted by the Decree of the 7th of May last to the holders of the Floating Debt, is reduced to 10 per cent.

By the effect of these measures, the financial position will be as follows:—

A. The Bonus included in the Table of Unification annexed to the Decree of 7th May amounting to ...	£6,204,327
is reduced—	
1st. By the entire Bonus on £2,906,151, the amount of the Floating Debt of the Daira... ..	£726,537
2ndly. By the Bonus on the Loans of 1864, 1865 and 1867	306,796
3rdly. By the reduction of the Bonus granted to the Floating Debts of the Malich and of the Daira on the Malich, viz, £5,170,993, 3/5ths of which representing the 15 per cent. to be deducted, is ...	3,102,597
	<hr/> 4,135,930
	<hr/> £2,068,397

have received interest up to the 15th July, will receive the interest from the 15th July to the due date of the next coupon. Those who have not converted will be entitled to the whole of their interest. It will be observed that the drawings have been suspended for 6 months. In cases where, since the Decree of the 7th May, the Agents for the Loans have nevertheless carried out the usual drawing, it will be for them, in concert with the Egyptian Government, to determine whether that drawing is to count as the first authorised drawing under the new Decree. Bonds thus drawn will, of course be paid at 80 and not at 100. It should be observed that it is not stated that the drawings are to take place on the 1st April, the 7th July, and the 22nd May, but what is meant is that the next payments of drawn bonds will be made then.

B. The Unified Debt of £91,000,000
 will be reduced as follows by these several
 deductions:—

1st. The Consolidated Debt of the Daira	...	5,909,280	
2ndly. The Floating Debt of the Daira	...	2,906,151	
3rdly. The Loans of 1864, 1865 and 1867	...	4,392,616	
4thly. The Railways and the Port of Alexandria	17,000,000		
5thly. Sundry Bonuses (as above)...	...	4,135,930	
			34,343,977
			56,656,023

There accrues to the Government on account of
 the Port of Alexandria, which is given as a
 guarantee, 2 millions in Bonds of the General Debt ... 2,000,000
 Balance at the disposal of the Government ... 343,977

* Total of the Unified Debt £59,000,000

To this debt of 59 millions an annuity of £4,177,720 sterling
 is assigned representing its redemption in 65 years, and interest
 at the rate of 7 per cent. upon the capital. ** Interest to run
 from 15th July, 1876.

This annuity is payable in two half-yearly payments of
 £2,088,860 each.

The revenues which are at present assigned to the Treasury
 of the Public Debt by our Decree of the 7th May, 1876, remain

* The Unified Debt includes, besides the Floating Debt,
 the balance of the old loans of 1862, 1868, and 1873, which re-
 mains over after the holders of those Loans have received the
 privileged Stock in exchange for their Bonds. It also includes
 the additional amount of Stock created under the Decree of the
 7th May, by which the total debt was raised to £91,000,000.
 This addition was described in official despatches of Mr. Rivers
 Wilson and General Stanton to Her Majesty's Government,
 published in Parliamentary Paper, Egypt, No. 8 (1876). It is
 important to observe that the provisions of the Decree of 7th
 May remain in force, except where they are expressly varied by
 the present Decree. Under the present Decree no additions or
 reductions are made in the Unified Debt, except those specified
 in the above figures, which bring down the debt to £59,000,000.

** The sinking fund has been calculated on the basis of paying
 off a capital sum of £59,000,000, bearing 7 per cent. interest, by
 half-yearly drawings at par. It should be particularly observed
 that side by side with the redemption of debt by purchases in the
 market during the next nine years, as described in Article 6, the
 ordinary sinking fund will be in operation from the first, and
 a certain number of bonds will be drawn half-yearly to be paid
 off at par in the usual way.

pledged as before, subject to the modifications which will result from the present Decree, which will be arranged by the Controllers-General to be mentioned hereafter, and by the Commissioners of the Public Debt.*

The £2,000,000 in Bonds of the General Debt accruing to the Government for the Port of Alexandria are not to be disposed of until after the entire payment of the amount of £704,000 due on 1st January, 1877, to the Contractors of the Port.

SECOND DIVISION.

Amortization.

ARTICLE 6.

The operation of redeeming the Bonds will be carried out by the Commissioners of the Treasury of the Public Debt. In order to increase the amount available for redemption, a deduction will be made of one-seventh of the interest of 7 per cent. which is assigned to the service of this debt, viz:—1 per cent. on the capital remaining to be redeemed at the beginning of each year.

The fund yielded by this deduction will be added to the sums available from the Moukabalah, and will be also employed in redeeming Bonds by means of public purchases, subject to the reservation mentioned hereafter, in case of public purchases not being made.

This deduction, however, will only be made to the end of the year 1885 at the latest, and if before that date the unified debt is reduced to forty millions sterling, payment of interest at 7 per cent. will be resumed from that moment.

The funds yielded by the Moukabalah will be paid in their entirety to the Commissioners of the Public Debt, to whom

* With regard to the revenues pledged for the annuity of the old Loans, they are to remain as they were, subject to such modifications as result from the present Decree and which are to be regulated by the Controllers-General and the Commissioners of the Public Debt. The modification is necessary owing to the revenues of the Railways being specially pledged to the privileged Loans. Only the balance of the Railway revenues, therefore, will remain as security for the General Debt, which has however been reduced in proportion.

the service of redemption is confided (*"service de 'amortissement."*) The Commissioners of the Treasury of the Public Debt will take out of the funds paid to them the sum necessary for the redemption of the 1864, 1865, and 1867 loans, and they will devote the available balance to the redemption of the general unified debt.*

In the event that after the service of the Public Debt shall have been provided for, the revenues should be insufficient to meet the estimated budget expenses of the Government, such as they are fixed in the table annexed to the present decree, the Finance Committee, composed of the Minister of Finance and the two Controllers-General, will give notice thereof to the Commissioners of the Public Debt. The latter will then keep back out of the available funds yielded by the Moukabalah, and intended for the redemption of the unified debt, the sum necessary to make up the difference.

In order to be in a position to meet this liability, the Commissioners of the Public Debt will keep in hand (*conservera dans ses caisses*) out of the available sums yielded by the Moukabalah and assigned for the redemption of the Public Debt, a sum of £600,000 per annum. This sum can only be sent to Europe after a notification of the Finance Committee mentioned above.

* This paragraph and the two that follow it, were introduced in order to meet any possible difficulty with regard to a deficiency in revenue, and to close the discussions on the amount of revenue which were being carried on between the Government and the negociators. Should the revenues not be sufficient to meet the Budget expenses of the Government as fixed in the table annexed to the Decree, as well as the charge on the public debt, the necessary balance is to be taken out of what remains over from the Moukabalah, when the annuities of the short loans have been paid. The Moukabalah amounting to upwards of £1,650,000, and the annuities on the short loans during the years when they are highest not exceeding £1,050,000, £600,000 would remain over to cover a deficiency in the revenues, should it arise. If the deficiency does not arise, the whole of the amount resulting from the Moukabalah (after the annuities on the short loans are paid), is to be devoted according to the general agreement, to paying off the unified debt. On the other hand, if the revenues, after meeting the sum

If, on the other hand, there is an excess of Revenue after the charge for the Public Debt and the Budget expenses above mentioned have been met, this excess is to be added to the Redemption Fund.

The amortization, both by the deduction of 1 per cent. and by the sums remaining available from the Moukabalah and the Budget surpluses, is to be conducted by means of public purchases so long as it will be possible to effect these purchases below the price of 75.

In the event that during the period of the Moukabalah purchases cannot be made at a rate below 75, the amortization is to take place by drawings at the rate of 75. As soon as the increments of revenues shall produce a Budget surplus of £150,000 per annum, the amortization will take place at the rate of 80.

necessary for the Budget expenses as aforesaid, and the charge on the Public Debt, show a surplus, that surplus is to be applied to redemption of debt. The three sums, therefore, (irrespective of the ordinary sinking fund), available for the redemption of debt, if there is a surplus, are as follows:—

1st. One per cent. on the amount of the unified debt outstanding at the beginning of the year.

2ndly. The amount of the Moukabalah after paying the annuity on the short loans.

3rdly. Excesses of revenue.

If the revenues fall off, the effect would be that there would be no excess to apply for the redemption of debt, and a portion of the Moukabalah Funds might be also absorbed.

The sums available for the payment of debt, as just described, are to be used in buying up unified debt by public purchases at the market price of the day; but if the Commissioners of the Public Debt should be unable to buy under the price of 75, then the redemption is to take place by drawings, and the Bonds drawn will be paid off at 75. This arrangement was made to secure in every case the necessary amount of reduction in the debt. Should the revenues increase so as to make a larger amount available for the reduction of debt, then the Bonds drawn are to be paid off at 80. The negotiators pointed out the objections to limiting any possible rise in the stock to 75, and it was therefore arranged that they should be paid at 80, if there should be sufficient funds to do so without imperilling the necessary reduction in the debt.

THIRD DIVISION.

Administration.

Controllers-General.

ARTICLE 7.

Two Controllers-General will be appointed, the one a Controller-General of Receipts, the other a Controller-General of Audit (*comptabilité*) and of the Public Debt.

ARTICLE 8.

The functions of the Controller-General of Receipts are the following :—

1st. The collection of all the Revenues of the State, and their payment into the receiving offices, to which they belong (*dans les caisses respectives*).

2ndly. He will have under his direction all the collectors, except the officials charged with the collection of Judicial Fees and others attached to the tribunals of the Judicial Reform (*Tribunaux de la Reforme*).

3rdly. He will propose their nomination to us through the channel of the Minister of Finance.

He will have the right to suspend them from their functions, and he can also dismiss them after a regular enquiry, with the concurrence of the Finance Committee, composed of the Minister of Finance and the two Controllers-General.

The Collectors of the Taxes in the Provinces (*Moudiriehs*) will be chosen from amongst Egyptian subjects, who are not disqualified by any such legal incapacity as may be provided against by law. *

* It will be observed that a limitation is imposed with regard to the choice of collectors in the Provinces. The Controller-General is to select them amongst natives. The objections to this limitation were pointed out to the Viceroy, but it was im-

4thly. It will be his duty to see that the Agents of Collection do not collect more than the authorised taxes. Collection cannot be enforced on the Tax Papers of the direct taxes, until after they have been countersigned by him.

5thly. It will be his duty to see that the produce in kind belonging to the Revenues is realized to the best advantage of the Treasury. The Finance Committee will look to the best means of realizing its value.

ARTICLE 9.

The Controller-General of Audit and the Public Debt will have to fulfil at the same time the functions of "Councillor to the Ministry of Finance."

These functions will be the following:—

1stly. It will be his duty to see to the execution of all the Regulations affecting the Debts of the State, without trenching on the functions which belong to the Commissioners of the Public Debt.

2ndly. He will control the general account keeping of the Treasury, and of all the Government Receiving Offices (*Caisses de L'Etat*).

3rdly. The Ministers or heads of administration, will have the regulation of all the expenses.

possible to persuade him to yield, at least for the present. At Cairo and Alexandria, and indeed in all the towns, and in all the branches of indirect revenue, such as the customs, the tobacco monopoly and the salt works, no limitation whatever is put on the employment of Europeans. The Viceroy argued against covering the interior of the country with Europeans. The Controllers-General themselves, he pointed out, could repair to the interior as much as they pleased. The limitation is much to be regretted, and it is to be hoped that the Viceroy's objections may be overcome later on. It should be clearly understood that amongst natives the Controller-General will have the freest range of choice, that he may suspend them at his discretion, and that the Finance Committee may dismiss them without power of interference being given to any one else.

The cheques or orders for payment (*des mandats ou assignments*) which they may issue must be countersigned by the Controller-General, in order to be honoured. *

4thly. The Controller-General will not have to judge of the expediency of the expenditure of the Government. He can only refuse his counter-signature to orders to pay (*mandats*) which would exceed the amount of the credits still open, or which would prevent sufficient funds remaining in hand to meet the balance of expenditure still to be incurred under the estimated budget of the current year.

ARTICLE 10.

The Controllers-General will take part in the preparation of the Budget. They are not to encroach upon the functions of the ministers, who will remain sole judges of the necessity of assigning credits to services of such and such a nature. Accordingly the Budget will be prepared by the Minister of Finance, who will centralise all the demands for credits made by the heads of departments.

The Budget having been thus prepared, will be submitted to the Council of Ministers, to which the two Controllers-General will be summoned.

When the Budget has been examined and revised, if necessary, it will be submitted by the Council to our approbation.

The Minister of Finance and the Controllers-General will see to the strict execution of the Budget.

* This section and the following one, are intended to prevent an amount destined for one purpose being used for another, and to prevent generally the improper uses of funds. The Controller would naturally countersign orders to pay in the regular course of administration, but he may refuse his signature if he finds that such orders exceed the amount the Minister issuing the orders is entitled to spend, or if the orders are so large that their payment would prevent the expenditure estimated for in the remainder of the year being adequately met.

ARTICLE 11.

The Finance Committee will have to give their approval, in the first instance (*préalablement*) to all contracts entailing pecuniary engagements, which would exceed $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the credits open for the year, or which would be applicable to several years.

ARTICLE 12.

It will be the duty of the Finance Committee to draw up the general regulations in the matter of public accounts (*en matière de comptabilité publique*), under our sanction.

ARTICLE 13.

Of the two Controllers-General one will be an Englishman, and the other a Frenchman.

ARTICLE 14.

The nomination and the choice of the Controllers-General will belong to us; but in order to satisfy ourselves with regard to the guarantees offered by the persons whom we may choose, we shall address ourselves unofficially (*officieusement*) to the English and French Governments, and we shall only engage persons who are furnished with the authority, or with the acquiescence of their Governments.*

* The language of this Article is almost identical with that used in the Decrees under which the Judges of the International Tribunals are appointed, with this exception—that in those decrees the authority *and* the acquiescence of the two Governments are required; whereas in this Decree the authority *or* the acquiescence is to be deemed sufficient. It will be observed that it is not assumed that the Governments will appoint, as a matter of course, but that provision is made for the event of the refusal on the part of either Government. The Viceroy was reluctant to assent to the choice of his high officials by any other than by the Governments of England or France, and it was found impossible to find any other authority to choose them, whose selection for this duty could be sufficiently supported by argument.

If one or the other of these Governments, at the time when the nominations have to be made, should not give its authority or its acquiescence, our choice will be made amongst the higher officials of the two countries, either in active service or retired.

ARTICLE 15.

The two Controllers-General will be named for five years. In case of their resignation or their death, the proceedings taken to replace them will be the same as those taken for their nomination.

ARTICLE 16.

The two Controllers-General will have the same rank and will receive the same remuneration.

ARTICLE 17.

They will be accountable only to us.

Commission of the Public Debt.

ARTICLE 18.

The Commission of the Public Debt is permanent until the entire debt is redeemed.

ARTICLE 19.

The Commissioners will have the right to send the funds which they will have encashed, direct to the Bank of England, and to the Bank of France. They will have the necessary powers to make this transmission of funds; but it will be their duty to come to an understanding beforehand with the Minister of Finance and the Controllers-General.

ARTICLE 20.

An English Commissioner will be added to the Commission of the Public Debt. The nomination and the choice of this Com-

missioner will belong to us; but in order to satisfy ourselves with regard to the guarantees offered by the person whom we shall choose, we shall address ourselves unofficially to the English Government, and we shall only engage a person furnished with the authority and acquiescence of his Government. If the English Government, at the time when this nomination is to be made, should not give its authority or its acquiescence, we should make choice of a higher official in the English service, either on the active or on the retired list.

ARTICLE 21.

The merchandise or produce given for payment of taxes in the provinces specially set apart for the service of the debt, will be placed at the exclusive disposal of the Commissioners of the Debt, who will have the power to sell it; coming, however, to an understanding (*en se concertant toutefois*) with the Minister of Finance and the Controllers-General as to the best means of realizing it.

ARTICLE 22.

The members of the Commission of the Public Debt will not be able to accept any other functions in Egypt.

Railways and Port of Alexandria.

ARTICLE 23.

The Railways which are now actually being worked, and the Port of Alexandria, will be placed under a Special Administration, which will be accountable only to us. This administration will be composed of five Administrators, of whom two will be English, one French, and two natives.

One of the two English Administrators will have the functions of President.

ARTICLE 24.

The annexation of the Administration of the Port of Alexandria to the Special Administration of the Railways, and the application of their revenues to the service of the Preference Debt, are not in any case to prejudice the contracts already existing with the Contractors, nor to modify the relations of the Government to the latter with regard to the work which is still to be executed.

ARTICLE 25.

The nomination and the choice of the Administrators will belong to us; but in order to satisfy ourselves with regard to the guarantees offered by the foreign Administrators whom we may choose, we shall address ourselves unofficially to the Governments of England and France, and we shall only engage persons furnished with the authority or the acquiescence of their Governments.

In the event that one or the other of these Governments should not give its authority or its acquiescence, our choice will be made amongst the higher officials, either civil or military, of the two countries, or of their great Railway Companies, either in active service or on the retired list.

ARTICLE 26.

The foreign Administrators will be named for five years. In case of their resignation or their death, the same proceedings will take place for replacing them as have been fixed for their nomination.

ARTICLE 27.

The Administration, formed as described above, will continue to act until all the privileged Bonds specially created have either been redeemed or paid off. The Port of Alexandria being comprised in this guarantee for the sum of £2,000,000, can be freed from this guarantee and detached from the Joint Administration as soon as £2,000,000 of these Preference Bonds shall have been redeemed or repaid.

The Railways being comprised in this guarantee for £15,000,000 sterling in Preference stock, can be freed by the redemption or the repayment of £15,000,000 of this Stock.

ARTICLE 28.

The Administrators will propose for our choice and nomination the superior employés of the Railways and the Port.

They will name the other employés direct.

They will have the right to suspend all the employés from their functions; they may also dismiss them after a regular enquiry.

They alone will have the right to make any modifications in the tariffs and in the regulations in force, under our sanction.

They will be exclusively charged with the duty of making contracts for the purchase of rolling stock or of fixtures, and for the matériel necessary for the working of the Railways and the service of the Port.

They will decide on the necessity of repairs in the matériel or the permanent way, as well as for the maintenance of the Port, all under our approval.

ARTICLE 29.

Provision will be made from the general resources of the Budget for extraordinary expenses which will have been decided on by the Administrators and approved by us.

ARTICLE 30.

All the receipts of the Railways and of the Port of Alexandria according as they come in, with the exception of what is necessary for the ordinary outlay for maintenance and for working expenses, and with the exception of the rights of the Contractors of the Port provided for in the contracts, will be paid in to the Treasury of the Public Debt, to which they are assigned.

ARTICLE 31.

The Commission of the Public Debt will open a special account for the service of the Preference 5 per cent. Bonds. The Commission will be bound to send any funds which are paid in to it by the Administration of the Railways and the Port, to the Banks of England and France, and likewise to a special account opened for the service of the Preference Stock issued on the Railways and on the Port.

ARTICLE 32.

In the event that the payments made by the Administration of the Railways and of the Port should be insufficient for the service of this Debt, the Commission of the Public Debt will have to provide for the service by taking as a first charge the necessary amount from the general resources which are assigned to it.

ARTICLE 33.

All the provisions of our Decrees of the 2nd and 7th May, 1876, which are not contrary to these presents remain in force.*

* The whole Decree of the 18th November must be read with those of the 2nd and 7th May. For instance, the Decree of the 2nd May created the Commission of the Public Debt, which is strengthened in the recent Decree. That Decree also gives the power to the Commissioners to appeal to the International Courts, if faith is not kept in the application of the revenues to the Treasury of the Public Debt. The late Minister of Finance received a judicial summons with regard to the non-payment of revenue a few days before his arrest. An attachment was also laid on the revenues of the railways. The following is the Article under which proceedings were taken against the Minister:—

“Les actions qu’au nom et dans l’intérêt des créanciers, en grande partie étrangers, la Caisse, et pour elle ses Directeurs, croiront avoir à exercer contre l’administration financière, représentée par le Ministre des Finances, pour ce qui concerne la tutelle des garanties de la Dette que nous avons confiée à la direction de la dite Caisse, seront portées dans les termes de leur juridiction devant les nouveaux tribunaux qui, suivant l’accord établi avec les Puissances, ont été institués en Egypte.”

Given at Cairo the 18th November, 1876.

(Signed) ISMAIL.

On behalf of the Khedive,

The Minister of Finance.

(Signed) HUSSEIN-KIAMIL.

TABLE of the Expenditure of the Egyptian Government mentioned in Article 6 of the above Decree.

Year	1877	...	...	...	£4,259,350
„	1878	...	...	...	£4,403,961
„	1879	...	...	...	£4,500,000
„	1880	...	...	...	£4,500,000
„	1881	...	...	...	£4,560,000
„	1882	...	...	...	£4,500,000
„	1883	...	...	...	£4,500,000
„	1884	...	...	...	£4,500,000
„	1885	...	...	...	£4,500,000

PROCEEDINGS
AT A
Meeting of Egyptian Bondholders,
HELD AT THE
CITY TERMINUS HOTEL,
CANNON STREET, LONDON,
TUESDAY, 28th NOVEMBER, 1876.

The Rt. Honourable E. PLEYDELL BOUVERIE in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN having made an introductory statement,
The Rt. Honourable GEORGE J. GOSCHEN, M.P., addressed
the Meeting as follows :—

MR. GOSCHEN.—Gentlemen, as the Chairman has said, it is eight weeks since we met in this hall, when you conferred upon me the power to negotiate on your behalf, in order, if possible, to bring to a satisfactory arrangement the various claims of the various classes of the Creditors of the Egyptian Government. I went to Egypt armed with your authority, and backed by the generous confidence which you showed in giving me such ample powers; and it was the knowledge that I was backed by, I believe, almost the unanimous support of the various Creditors of Egypt in this country, which gave me a force in negotiating with the Government of Egypt, which I should never have had under any other circumstances; and it is to that confidence which you displayed, and to the public opinion by which I was supported, that I must ascribe some portion of what I may hope I may

call the success of our mission to Egypt. I was assisted by other circumstances. I had with me a colleague who possessed the confidence of the French Creditors; and let me, as a simple act of justice, render my homage to the straightforwardness, to the courage, to the ability, and to the perfect good humour, with which my colleague, M. Joubert, has supported me, and worked with me from the beginning to the end. We had the further advantage, an advantage which perhaps for the first time has been secured in Egypt, that there was no rivalry between the English and the French; that the English Consul-General and the French Consul-General worked harmoniously together; that there were no jealousies of one Government with regard to the course which might be taken by the other; and that that game was proved to have been played out which has often been played with such success in Egypt, the game of playing off one Government against another Government, one set of bankers against another set of bankers, and one public opinion against another public opinion. On this occasion we had this support, that there was but one public opinion, namely, the public opinion that Egypt ought to meet her engagements to the best of her ability. It is my duty to tell you, and I do so with the greatest satisfaction, that we derived very great assistance from Mr. Vivian, the English Consul-General, and very great assistance also from Baron de Michel, the French Consul-General, throughout the whole of the difficult negotiations in which we have been engaged. That those negotiations have been difficult and intricate I need scarcely assure you. We have had times when we thought that the result would be that we must throw them up, and abandon the chance of coming to a satisfactory arrangement; and our minds were clearly made up, from the moment when we left these shores, that unless we could make a fairly satisfactory arrangement it would be better to make no arrangement at

all. We did not care to come back to this country with a scheme which looked well on paper, but which we could not believe in as a practicable and a sound and a solid scheme. We have certainly had very considerable difficulty in carrying out our views; but when the difficulties were greatest, and when our discouragement was greatest, I thought of the immense interest which was taken in our negotiations by so many families throughout the length and breadth of the land; I thought of the immense interests which were confided to our care; and I was buoyed up in our arduous labours by the knowledge that if we should succeed, we should succeed in assisting and extricating from their embarrassments a large number of persons deeply interested in the finances of Egypt.

Well, gentlemen, the first question which you want to know from me is, what we have done. I am afraid that my story may be somewhat long. I must appeal to your patience; but I will endeavour to explain, in broad lines, the general features of our plan. You will understand that in a meeting such as this, it is impossible to go into much detail; and, afterwards, I shall take care to place myself in communication with those who have issued the various Loans, so that upon any question of details you may be able to address yourselves to others, to whom I shall be glad to give every possible information; but I trust that I may say this, and that you will give me your indulgence when I say it, that it will be impossible for me, after I have made my statement to you, and have made my statement to those who represent you in various ways, to correspond in detail with individual Bondholders as to the various matters which touch the various parties. And now let me say one word of caution. I have, unfortunately, but too strongly this sentiment, that you are looking to the words which I may say to form your judgment as to

the soundness of Egyptian Finance. I know the responsibility which will attach to what I say; men may buy upon the strength of what I say, or men may sell upon the strength of what I say; of all that I can know nothing. All that I have to tell you is what I have seen with my own eyes; I must tell you what has happened; I will tell you my impressions; I will tell you how I have endeavoured to secure that the resources of Egypt should be applied to satisfying her creditors, as well as satisfying the needs of the State; but it is not for me either to bolster up Egyptian credit, or to throw it down. My function is to represent those Bondholders, and those only, who held the Stock at the time when I went to Egypt. For them I have endeavoured to secure the best terms possible and the best possible guarantees; but there I venture to ask that my responsibility may cease. I cannot be responsible either for speculations or for views which may be held as regards Egyptian Finance: only, I will undertake to make a clean breast of all I know at the present moment, and tell you the whole facts as they have occurred.

It may be convenient that I should, in the first place, deal loan by loan with the various classes of creditors as briefly as possible. Most of you know already that the loan of the Daira has not been included in the general arrangement. The reasons have been various why it was impossible so to include it. In the first place, the attitude of a certain portion of the holders rendered it almost impossible to secure a unanimous adhesion to any particular scheme. The matter was before the courts; many of the Creditors believed that they held judgments which would enable them to encash their debts in full; and to have included the Daira in a general arrangement might have risked the whole of that arrangement. From the beginning we have been anxious to obtain from the Viceroy proposals,

or his authority to make proposals, for the arrangement of the affairs of the Daira, which you know is his private estate. We found great difficulty during the earlier portion of our stay in Egypt, in obtaining any declaration from the Viceroy upon the subject of the Daira. Towards the end of our visit we were requested to endeavour to make a plan with regard to the Daira; but we did not receive the necessary figures to enable us to judge of the solvency and the capacity of the Viceroy's private estate until two or three days before we left Egypt, a period which rendered it impossible for us thoroughly to examine that important asset. But we had one or two most important conversations with the Viceroy upon the subject, and the following is what I may call the outline of the offer of the Viceroy with regard to the Daira Loan of 1870, and the Daira floating debt. What he said was this: "I will give up the whole to the Creditors. I will consent that it shall be placed in the hands of Trustees, of whom two shall be Europeans named by the Creditors, and one an Egyptian named by myself. They may take the whole of the proceeds of my private Estate; they may settle the interest which they consider that Estate will bear, and the remainder shall be used as a Sinking Fund for paying off the debt. I make no claim to any portion of the proceeds myself."

The Viceroy ended that statement by saying: "Can I do more than offer the whole of the Estate to the Creditors?" That was his offer. It will have to be submitted to a meeting which will have to be called of the holders of the Daira Loan; the position being this, that the Viceroy says, "Take all that I have got, and administer it under Trustees for the benefit of the Creditors." But it will be necessary to make an examination into the accounts to see what interest can be paid. Gentlemen, this Daira Loan is not included in our arrangements, but I thought it important to state in a general way the broad feature of the offer of the Viceroy.

I now come to the short loans; and, before telling you the arrangement which has been made for the separate loans, let me make one further appeal to your indulgence; I hope that it will be the last appeal of that sort which I may have to make. We have thought it indispensable to exact some sacrifice almost from every creditor of Egypt. Without asking everybody to make some sacrifice we could not have succeeded in our general plan; we have been obliged to take a broad view of the matter: we have endeavoured to be equitable between the various classes of loans; but I have no doubt that the holders of individual loans will think that they might possibly have had some further little advantage, and that some other loan has been treated too well. We have endeavoured to do our best. We appeal to your generous judgment in this matter. Do not say "The negotiators ought to have got this and that for such and such a particular loan." The question is, could we have got it? Possibly we tried to get it, but we failed. We could not make a perfect arrangement, because no arrangement would have been perfect except giving every creditor the full rights to which he was entitled. We come back with a compromise which I hope will be satisfactory on the whole; but some sacrifice has been asked from the holder of every class of Egyptian securities. Now these short loans are to be put back into the position in which they stood before the Decree of the 7th of May; they are to be put back into that position with this sacrifice which the holders are called upon to make, that their bonds should be paid off at 80 instead of 100—but a special revenue, the Moukabala, is assigned as a security on their behalf. That revenue will be paid over to the Commissioners of the Public Debt; it amounts to upwards of £1,600,000. The annuities of the short loans during the first years, when they are highest, are a little over one million;

the security, therefore, appears to be ample. The holders are to receive the same interest to which they have hitherto been entitled; the sinking fund will be resumed with but an interval of six months; and the loans will be paid off at 80 instead of 100. And do not compare the position in which you will be with that to which you are entitled according to the original contract—but I ask you, in justice, to compare these terms with those which were originally given under the decree of the 7th of May. One of the points on which we were bound to insist was that justice should be done to the short loans. We have obtained security for them; we have obtained the arrangement that they shall enjoy the same interest as hitherto, and, with some sacrifice, that they shall be paid off within six months of the term in which they were entitled to be paid off according to the contracts. Those remarks apply to the debts of 1864, 1866, and 1867, the three short loans amounting in all to about £4,250,000.

I now come to the other three Consolidated Loans, namely, the 1862 loan, the 1868 loan, and the 1873 loan, the old Consolidated Loans. For them we have obtained the following advantage: The railways, which were a special security, are to be placed under a special international (I may call it) administration, composed of two Englishmen, one Frenchman, and two Egyptians. An Englishman is to be the President. A 5 per cent. Preference Stock is to be created upon the security of the revenues of the railways and of the Harbour of Alexandria. The revenues of the railways for the year 1875 amounted to about one million sterling; they were put at a million in Mr. Cave's budget; and the revenues of the Port of Alexandria are estimated, after the new tariff shall have been fixed, to amount to upwards of £130,000. I am speaking of the revenues which will secure the privileged debt of seventeen millions which has been created. The Commissioners, or the Board, if I may call it

so, who are to administer the railways, are to have strong and independent powers; they are to have the power of fixing the tariffs, subject to the sanction of the Viceroy; they are to have full powers of making all contracts for rolling stock, and for the appointment of all the employés; in fact, the administration of the railways and the Port of Alexandria is withdrawn from the general Egyptian administration, and placed under a separate administration, of which the majority are Europeans. I may, if I am able to go through the long story which I have to tell you, have to say another word, by and by, on the immense collateral importance of setting up, in a country like Egypt, European administrations, who will make contracts upon European principles, who will see that all the abuses of free passes, and free goods passed on railways without payment, are done away with, and who will bring the whole matter into order. That will have, I trust, an advantage in Egypt beyond the pecuniary advantage of securing the bonds which are secured upon those railways. Already a distinguished Indian officer, General Marriott, has been selected by the Viceroy; he will be the President of this Railway Board: he is already at his work, inspecting the line, and looking into the general situation of affairs.

Now these £17,000,000 are issued upon the railways and on the Port of Alexandria; and I should say this—it is a very important point which I had almost omitted—namely, that I have stipulated that these £17,000,000 should not only be secured by the proceeds of the railways and the Port of Alexandria, but that they should form a first charge upon the whole of the remaining revenues of Egypt. You will see that about £850,000 is necessary for paying the interest of 5 per cent. upon these bonds; but if the proceeds which I have mentioned, ever should be short by a couple of hundred thousand pounds (I do not know that they would be so) that difference will form a first charge

upon the whole of the general revenues of Egypt, and will have to be paid in the first instance, before any other charges, by the Commissioners of the Public Debt. I have, therefore, in deference to that view which I so strongly expressed, that some regard ought to be had to special securities, endeavoured by this arrangement to secure to the holders of 1862, 1868 and 1873 stock, a preference over the remaining debt. That preference you will receive in this manner; the 17 millions are about two-fifths* of the whole of the amount of those three loans; therefore any one who holds £500 of such stock would be entitled to ask for £200 of this Preferential Stock, while the £300 would be converted into unified debt; and as there may be some persons who would prefer to hold the ordinary 7 per cent. Stock, there is this further stipulation to be made, that any surplus which should not be asked for as a matter of right, would be distributed again amongst the holders of those same three loans; so that you can ask first to receive your proportion, which will amount to about two upon five, and you can also apply to have your share *pro rata* in any excess which may remain over when the applications have been sent in.

The *Daira* I have dealt with. I have dealt with the short loans. I have dealt with the three consolidated loans. The remaining debt is the unified debt, and will stand at £59,000,000. It will bear an interest of 7 per cent., and a sinking fund, which will pay it off at par in sixty-five years. And let me here clear up a point which has not been entirely understood. For this unified debt, we arrange a special extraordinary sinking fund during the next nine years; but side by side with that extraordinary sinking fund the

* Two-fifths would be 40 per cent. The exact proportion is 38.40 per cent., but the proportion given, in the text, is near enough to furnish a fairly accurate example.

ordinary sinking fund will go on as usual. That will be by the annual drawings in the ordinary manner, and bonds thus drawn annually will be paid off at par.

But I now come to that which I consider to be the key of the scheme which we proposed to the Viceroy and which has been accepted. The difficulty of the Viceroy was this—arrangements have been made under a law which is called the law of the Moukabala, by which the proprietors or the peasants of the soil, made an advance of the land tax, and by paying six times the amount of the land tax of one year they were to be freed for ever from one-half of the land tax. This arrangement was made in order to pay off a portion of the floating debt. The proprietors of the soil said to the Government, "You are incurring debt on extraordinarily heavy terms; we will advance our taxes for six years, and with that you will be able to pay off some of your most onerous debts." But no guarantees were established; the proceeds of the Moukabala have not been applied to the purposes for which they were intended, and no portion of the floating debt appears to have been paid off with the advances made in respect of the land tax of the future. It is for us to take precautions that a similar result may not happen again. The financial position of Egypt is therefore, as follows: This payment of six years' taxes in advance was to be spread over twelve years, and the last payment will be made in the year 1885. The Egyptian Government is therefore in this position during the next nine years—it has an extraordinary resource in these advanced payments of the land tax of future years, which amounts to upwards of £1,650,000 a year. It has also to look forward to this fact, that in 1886 the land tax will be only half what it was when this law of the Moukabala was first passed. Some time has already

passed over, but the financial effect is as follows :—in 1886 the Government will lose £1,600,000, the amount of this Moukabala, and it will also lose, as compared with the present land tax, £1,200,000. Therefore the Viceroy said, and he said with justice, “It is not enough that I can make an arrangement under which I can pay during the next nine years ; you must show me how I can meet my creditors, how I can meet my engagements, in 1886, when there will be this great falling off in the revenues of Egypt.” He was perfectly right in putting such a statement forward. Well, the view which seemed to be taken by the Egyptian Government was this, that, as on those figures he would only be able to pay 5 per cent. in 1886, he should only pay 5 per cent. during the coming nine years ; but we did not at all look upon the matter in the same light. During the next nine years he has this advance of future taxes. For what had that advance been originally created ? Why, to pay off debt. Then we said to the Viceroy, “Use the Moukabala for paying off debt during the next nine years ; it is for that that this law was established, and your creditors will also consent, during those nine years, to make a certain sacrifice, not to enable you to spend more money, but to enable you to bring about such a reduction in the debt of Egypt, that in 1886, you will still be able to meet your engagements and to pay 7 per cent. That was the course upon which we entered—that was the discussion which we began with the Egyptian Government. They placed their figures before us—we examined those figures and we came to this arrangement with them, that as they were in the somewhat unusual position of having to face a falling off in the Revenue nine years hence, during that interval so large a sinking fund should be established as to reduce debt in proportion to the falling off in the Revenue. Let this be thoroughly understood. In 1886 the Revenues of Egypt

will fall, but by that time, if the Viceroy keeps his engagements, the debt will also have been reduced to that point that if he receives less he will have to pay less, and the liabilities will have been diminished in proportion, and, as we hope, more than in proportion, to the assets which there will be to meet those liabilities. If all goes on well, the position will be better than it is now, for this reason, that the burden upon the land will have been so largely diminished—the burden upon the land will have been diminished by one-half as compared with the time when the Moukabala commenced—besides being relieved of that extra payment which now enters into the receipts of the Government of Egypt. The matter, I am afraid, is somewhat complicated ; but fasten this on your minds, that a large sinking fund has been established, and that with that large sinking fund, the debt is to be reduced in order to meet the year 1886. During the next nine years, 6 per cent. only will be paid to you instead of 7 per cent., but at the end of those nine years, by the process of redemption, and by the sinking fund, the debt will have been reduced, and then the 7 per cent. is to be resumed as before. And I have the satisfaction of announcing to you that the Viceroy stated to us, when the plan was signed, that he was himself convinced of its soundness and of its practicability, and that he wound up his conversation with us by thanking us warmly for the plan and the expedient. Do not think therefore, gentlemen, that this plan has been carried by putting a pistol to the Viceroy's breast. It has been accepted by him cordially at the last ; he speaks of it in cordial terms, and he speaks with satisfaction of having been extricated from the difficulties in which he found himself ; and I leave it to you to say whether it is not infinitely better to have made an arrangement with the Government of Egypt, which they believe they can carry out, than if we had had to force

an arrangement upon them which they signed because they could not avoid it, but which in their hearts they believed could not be carried out

Now, the main point which you have a right to ask me is this, "Have you satisfied yourself that the revenues of Egypt are such as to enable the Government to keep the engagements which it has made?" Whether the plan which we have proposed, and which has been accepted, can be carried out or not, must depend upon three elements, namely, the financial resources of Egypt, the guarantees taken that those resources shall be properly applied, and last, but not least, the good faith of the Government on whose good will, after all, the execution of these plans must depend. With regard to the financial resources of Egypt, let me first tell you that the ex-Minister of Finance, who is now in exile, had made up his mind that Egypt should only pay 5 per cent.; and all the documents which were in the first instance submitted to us, were submitted to us by a Government who, in our opinion, were anxious to prove that they could not pay 5 per cent. We looked at those documents in that light. Now let me put one consideration before you. I know enough of the English public to feel convinced of this, that if the English public believed that the taxpayers of Egypt were unable to bear taxes which would enable 7 per cent. to be paid, they would be content with less. The English public is not one which would wish to grind down the taxpayers of Egypt. But while I say this, I know again that the Bondholders in England would not wish to sacrifice their just rights in order to increase the expenditure, or the power of expenditure, of the Egyptian Government. And there is a point which may not have struck so forcibly many of those who would have been content to accept 5 per cent., namely this, that it is a dangerous precedent to allow an Oriental Government, first by gross

financial maladministration, to frighten European creditors, and when they have thoroughly frightened them, to propose a reduction of the interest which they are to pay. I was not prepared to lend myself to such a result. Measures have been taken, measures on which I must say a word, to alarm the Creditors of Egypt beyond the necessities of the case; and the late Minister of Finance appeared but too ready, when it was suggested that 5 per cent. well secured would be better than 7 per cent., to grasp at the offer and to say—"If the English Bondholders are ready to take 5 per cent., well, 5 per cent. they shall have, and no more." I ought to tell you that in no single interview which I have had with the Viceroy, has there been a single question of a reduction of taxation. The point was never put before us, "We cannot pay because the taxes are too high." The point which was put before us was this:—"The needs of the State (in other words, the expenditure) will prevent us from paying so much;" but no prospect was ever held out that if you had made a surrender of your interest, that surrender would have gone in relief of the Egyptian taxpayers; and, under those circumstances, it appeared to us that it would have been most injudicious, merely for the purpose of enabling the Egyptian Government to have a heavier Budget of Expenditure, to sanction the principle that engagements were not to be respected, and that the rate of interest was to be reduced.

Now as to the means of paying these taxes, we had before us several documents. We had the actual receipts of the year 1875; they amounted to something between $10\frac{1}{2}$ and 11 millions sterling. This was one of the documents which was placed before us by the Government, in a series of documents, to prove that they could not pay 7 per cent. We had before us the elaborate and most useful work of Mr. Cave; we had before us tables collected by Mr.

Wilson, who succeeded him; we had further the results of the inquiry made by M. Villet, who was a French Government official of high rank, and who was for many months in Egypt, and who, in order to verify statements made to him, summoned the chiefs of the various provinces where the taxes were collected. He inquired into the matter, and he came to this conclusion—he put the revenues also at between $10\frac{1}{2}$ and 11 millions. Then we had before us some very interesting documents collected by an agent of a foreign government, which was neither the French Government nor the English Government, which had been collected in order to show what taxes were being paid in the Provinces. We had before us the Budget of the Government for the year 1877. That Budget, with the corrections which the Government afterwards admitted, amounts in round numbers to £10,450,000. Now you will ask, What security have we that any of these figures are correct? We did our best. In the first instance, we compared statement with statement, tax with tax, province with province. We found out that the results of the secret inquiry made by the representative of a foreign government showed that the taxes paid in the provinces were higher and not lower than those which were put in the Government accounts. We found instances of suppressions of revenue in the year 1877. We instituted what I may call a system of unrelenting cross-examinations with regard to the various items of revenue. We found cases where revenues had been diminished, but we were not able to find cases where the revenues had been exaggerated. And remember that the government were in the position of an adverse witness, with the wish rather to minimise their receipts than to maximise those receipts. We found that there had been flagrant misrepresentations some time back, but which were now most cynically disavowed. We found this, for

instance, that a few months ago the late Minister of Finance offered one million excess of revenue as a security to some French bankers for fresh advances. We found that at another time he offered the sum of £600,000, which he stated was not included in the budget, also as a bait for further advances. This excess of revenue was entirely thrown over, it was an entire mistake. The £600,000 was also thrown over, it was partly included in the budget, in part it could not be collected. All this proved to us the exceeding bad faith, the scandalous bad faith, of the late Minister of Finance; but the result was that we saw that at present the exaggerations were abandoned, and that figures were put before us such as were about equivalent, as far as we could make out, to the receipts of 1875. Let me give you one bit more of evidence. We wanted to know what had become of the revenue of the present year; you remember that I told you, we must find out why payments have not been made to the Commissioners of the Public Debt. We exacted from the Government a statement of all that they had encashed and what they had spent during the last year. We obtained a statement of the amounts of the receipts up to August last, with an estimate added for the remainder of the present year, according to the latest sources of information. It included more than a year, because through a change in the Calendar, the present Budget is from January to January, whereas before it had been from the middle of September to the middle of September. The accounts, therefore, which we had, were accounts of about fifteen months and a half. The receipts acknowledged to for the year 1876, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ months of the year 1875, notwithstanding the commercial crisis, and notwithstanding the unfavourable position of Egypt in most respects, were £12,800,000.

The position of Egypt, therefore, is this—we have no

evidence of any deficiency of revenues. The difficulties of Egypt have arisen from financial mal-administration and from gross and scandalous extravagance, but they have not come from the want of payments into the chest of the Treasury. In fact, the late Minister of Finance is said to have boasted that there was one year when he had extracted fifteen millions from the people of Egypt. But what we heard was this—not that the taxes could not be paid by the Egyptian tax-payers, but that there was a gross system of excessive and unauthorised over-taxation in addition to the taxes imposed by the Government; and we should not have done right, I think, if in the plan which we have succeeded in carrying, we had not taken precautions to protect the taxpayers of Egypt against that excessive and unauthorised taxation, in the same way as we have endeavoured to take guarantees for the proper payment into the public chest of the funds as they come in. The Viceroy has accepted from us the proposal which we made—that no taxes can be levied from the taxpayers of Egypt, unless the taxpapers are countersigned by a European Controller-General.

Well, gentlemen, I have given you the evidence with regard to the revenue, and all I can say is this—we have examined, we have cross-examined, we have asked for explanations, and for explanations of the explanations, and we can find no evidence that the revenues of Egypt are less than the £10,450,000 which the Government show in their latest figures—figures prepared, not to put before contractors who wished to give them money, but prepared to put before the representatives of creditors who wanted to get money from them.

But now we come to the expenses. You have this revenue of £10,450,000. From that you must deduct what I call the extraordinary receipt of the *Moukabala*, which is not a perma-

ment asset, and which is only to be applied to the sinking fund and to the payment of debt. That leaves, in round figures, £8,800,000 of permanent revenue. You may be interested to know that of this sum £1,000,000 is revenue from the railways, and £550,000 is revenue of the municipalities of Cairo and Alexandria, which is really not to be considered as Imperial taxation at all, (if I may use the phrase,) and that there is another item for the payment of back debts due from certain parts of the country. At least £1,800,000 out of the £8,800,000 can scarcely be regarded as taxation; so that the real taxation of Egypt should rather be put at 7 millions. I have made this remark in answer to some of the criticisms which are put forward and which take the sum of 10½ millions as a burden too large for a country like Egypt to bear.

Well, I have told you everything that I can tell you with regard to the revenues—I have not seen the revenues come into the chest—that is impossible; but we have examined the evidence and we give you the result of the evidence. And now let me mention one interesting circumstance. We believe that it was part of the plan of the late Minister of Finance, by paying nothing into the chest of the Commissioners of the Public Debt, to produce the impression that the revenues of Egypt were in such a condition that they could not pay at all. We found out that instead of those revenues being paid in to the Commissioners of the Public Debt they were applied to other purposes, and that they were used to meet a portion of the expenditure of the Government. When we came to Egypt, £300,000 had been paid in during the months of July, August, and September. When we arrived there the payments into the chest were almost suspended altogether, although under the Decree of the 7th of May they ought to have continued their usual course. While we were there, during the first four weeks,

scarcely any payments at all were made. When we had signed our agreement with the Viceroy a wonderful change took place, and I have now the pleasure to announce to you that whereas some three or four weeks ago there were but £300,000 as the result of three or four months' payments, there are now £900,000 in the hands of the Commissioners of the Public Debt. £900,000 have been paid in. In fact the moment the new Minister of Finance, a son of the Viceroy, was appointed, the whole system appeared to be changed; the revenue was paid in not only in large amounts but in such small amounts as showed that orders had been given that the engagements which had been made were to be respected, and that the revenues specially assigned were to be paid in to those who were specially appointed to receive them.

Well now, as regards the expenses, the first demand which was put forward by the Egyptian Government when they were still, if I may say so, on the tack that they could only pay five per cent., was, "We want five millions annually." Their annual budgets hitherto had simply been four millions; and by way of encouragement to their Creditors to abandon a portion of their interest, they asked that they might be allowed to expend one million more than their annual budgets had previously been. We scouted the idea. We would rather have come back than have signed a contract by which sacrifices should be made by the Creditors in order that the Egyptian Government should spend one million more, especially when on examining the items we found that no less a sum than £350,000 had been added to the budget of the Egyptian Minister of War, and that another large sum had been added for pensions to members of the Viceregal family. Well, gentlemen, that budget was soon withdrawn; we wrote a letter, a stiffish letter, if I may say so, upon the subject of that budget, and we heard no more about it.

The next demands which came were these, that the annual sum should be £4,200,000 for the year 1877, £4,400,000 for the year 1878, and £4,500,000 afterwards. Now that appeared to us to be too much; but the Viceroy made use of a very specious and plausible argument; he said, "You are going to tie my hands so tight in future, that unless I have an ample margin, I shall get into difficulties; you are not going to allow me to borrow any money." "Certainly not," we replied to that. European administration will be introduced; the old means of raising the wind will be cut off; and listen to one clause which we have carried, that no engagement shall be entered into by the Egyptian Government, pledging its credit for more than one year, which is not countersigned by two European Controllers-General. Under these circumstances, the Viceroy looked upon it, if I may say so without offence to the Egyptian Government, as if he was going to be put upon an allowance, and therefore he said—"I must take care that my allowance is ample." Now what we want is this; we want the Viceroy to have no loophole for saying that his engagements cannot be carried out; we want so to arrange affairs as that he will be able to carry out his engagements. We would not leave it in his mouth to say "You have cut down my expenditure to such a point that I cannot keep my engagements." Thus we accepted his figures; we took four and a half millions, and we showed him that with the figures which he gave as regards revenue, and the figures which he gave as regards expense, he would still be able to execute the plan which we put before him, viz.; to pay 6 per cent. interest during the next nine years, and to pay off sufficient debt as to bring it down, in 1886, to the necessary amount. We made a further concession to him (and I call your attention to this point). When the exile of the late Minister of Finance had taken place, there was a total change in the attitude of the

Egyptian Government; from that time forward they argued and behaved and dealt with us as men who intended to carry out the arrangement which we were putting before them. Their arguments were all directed to that point; and the Viceroy, with an ability and a shrewdness of which I cannot speak in too high terms, saw every weak point which could possibly be urged, and tried to prevent those weak points from injuring the scheme. For instance, he said, and he said justly, "You, in your scheme, have assumed that you will be able to buy back at 60 and at 65; but supposing that the debt goes up to 80 or 90, you will then not be able to cancel sufficient stock in order to bring down the debt to the point at which we must have it in 1886; I therefore propose, that if the stock rises to 75 then, instead of making purchases in the market, Bonds shall be drawn, and be paid off at 75;" and he said, "I propose this, not to do the creditors out of the difference between the two, but because I wish to see clearly before me that the debt can be reduced by the year 1886 to the point at which it must be reduced in order that I may be in a state of financial equilibrium." Now, that I considered an honest argument upon the part of the Viceroy; and we assented to this, that if the stock rose to 75, this extraordinary Sinking Fund (not the ordinary Sinking Fund, which will go on at par) should be applied by drawings at 75. But I saw that I might fairly bargain for a point on behalf of the creditors. I said to him, "But, your Highness, supposing that the revenues should increase, as they probably will increase in the course of four or five years, you will have an excess of revenue, and if there is that excess of revenue you can pay off at 80 and still be in the same position." He said, "I grant you this; if there is that excess of revenue then we will pay off the debt at 80 instead of at 75." Now these are complicated matters on paper, but I cite them to you in order to prove that at this stage of

our negotiations there was *bona fides* on the part of the Viceroy; and we made this arrangement with him, that if there should be any falling off in the revenues, in order that he should not fall into any financial embarrassment, always under the check and control of our two European Controllers-General, a certain sum of the Extraordinary Sinking Fund could be kept back in order to meet any deficiency which might occur. The Viceroy was determined, as he said, to see his way clearly; but when we pointed out that notwithstanding all the objections which he had taken, even with the most unfavourable figures, the reduction would be sufficient, he accepted our plan, and he accepted it with cordiality.

Now, I trust that I am approaching the end of my long tale; but if I tell you all this it is because I wish you to be in the same position as I am in myself, to share the responsibility, and that you may not act because you think that I think so and so, but that you may be able to judge for yourselves of the situation. Well, the Viceroy having generally settled with us upon these financial points, he raised one which caused us considerable annoyance, and upon which we might almost have broken off our negotiations. Using the argument which I have mentioned, that he must see his way clearly, he pointed to the list of his liabilities to which I have already alluded and said, "I have got large amounts of revenue coming in, I have got large assets, I know, but if you look at the list of my liabilities you will see that I have to pay in January £700,000 to the Contractor for the Port of Alexandria. You will see that there are other small debts which I owe, and this is my last chance; I want to be able to say that I see my way perfectly clearly, and that there is no embarrassment before me; I want to feel a free man, and in order to do this you must consent to an addition to the Debt of two millions, which if sold at 60 will give me £1,200,000; £700,000 of it I want for the Contractor in the Port of Alexandria; the remainder for other debts." Now

I had hoped that for once it would have been possible to have made an arrangement for the creditors without a single addition, direct or indirect, to the total of the Egyptian debt. We had reduced the debt by four millions of the bonus which had been given up by the holders of the floating debt; the debt had been reduced, but the Viceroy asked for these two millions. We refused it point blank. We said, "This cannot be done;" and we gave him further to understand, that if he were to say, "I will sign your agreement, but how I am to find these two millions I do not know, and if there is any financial embarrassment you must take the consequence,"—we should not accept such a decision on his part. We were determined that we would only accept from him a cordial and sincere acceptance of the scheme, because otherwise it might have been broken at once, as the Decree of the 7th of May was broken. We were afraid that the negotiations might have been broken off. The Viceroy then, however, hit upon a somewhat ingenious idea—and the Viceroy, I am bound to say, is as ingenious a financier as I have ever met with—the Viceroy found that he had got an asset which was not pledged, and the revenues of which had not entered, or had only entered to a small amount, into the Budget. There was the Port of Alexandria, which had cost more than two millions, and on which the debt of £700,000 was due; and what he proposed was this, "Add those two millions to the privileged debt of 15 millions and take the revenues of the Port, which are free; the two millions will only cost £100,000 if they are put in with the privileged debt, and the additional revenues will pay that £100,000." We gave at last a reluctant assent to that proposal of the Viceroy. It lay between that and putting it in the Viceroy's hands to say that he had been unable to carry out the scheme; and we assented to it for this reason also, that there was a great administrative advantage in putting the Port of Alexandria permanently into European

hands, under European Commissioners, and joining it with the administration of the railway. Your interests have not suffered in any way. The Viceroy does not get those two millions, because I insisted that those additional two millions should be offered, like the other 15 millions, to the holders of the old debts, but the Viceroy gets in exchange two millions of the unified debt, and those will not be placed at his free disposal, but he cannot receive them till the £700,000 on the Port has been paid off; he will have to deposit them against that payment. There remains a half million in cash which, if I may say so, the Viceroy has made by the transaction. Now, it is a small matter, but I should not have done my duty if I had not put that point before you. I do not consider it a blot in the scheme, or a blot in the administration, but if you think it a blot on our negotiations, I must leave it to your judgment. It was almost impossible to avoid it. I detested yielding to the idea that a single shilling should accrue in addition to what the Viceroy had received from the former loans; but we consented under the circumstances which I have explained to you, and then the Viceroy said,—“Now I see my way clearly; I am a free man; my position is that of a man who has passed through great embarrassments, and who now thinks that he sees fairly the prospect of easy times before him.”

Now, gentlemen, I have told you the financial part of the plan; but, as I have said before, I have considered that this whole scheme, all this sinking fund and these arrangements for security, would have been only waste paper, unless we had had them accompanied by absolute and proper guarantees; and at an early stage after our arrival in Egypt, we made up our minds that unless we could carry two European Controllers-General—the one to see to the receipts and the other to see to the expenditure, and especially the engagements of the Public Debt—we would sooner return than put our names to a scheme of which we

did not see the certainty that it would be carried out. I saw that we saw this soon after we were in Egypt, and I regret to add, but I must make a clean breast of it, that if I expected to find in Egypt great financial mal-administration, that which we learned of the proceedings of the last ten months, exceeded the darkest views which I had taken of what was going on in Egypt. The main author or instrument of that policy, which has been pursued, is now in exile; but I consider it my duty to tell you that you would not have a picture of Egypt without my stating to you, in one or two sentences, some of the things which have occurred. For instance, a portion of the revenue was paid in kind—it was paid we will say, in wheat and cotton—the Minister of Finance sold that cotton and that wheat before they were delivered; he received advances on them; the cotton and the wheat were delivered; they were not delivered, however, to the people to whom he had sold them for delivery, but they were sold over again, so that he received money twice for them. I tell you these things, because it is right that they should be known, so that you may judge by them of the necessity of the guarantees which we have taken. Now here is another point, a transaction which is almost amusing in its atrocity, if I may say so. I told the Viceroy the following short story, and, if you will allow me, I will tell it to you. I told it to the Viceroy, and I do not know what the consequences may have been, but I shrewdly suspect them. You will remember that in January last, the English Government had given 4,000,000 to the Egyptian Government for the Suez Canal Shares; the Egyptian stock had risen largely; it stood at 70 or thereabouts. At that time a mysterious seller appeared on the scene—he sold, not in hundreds of thousands, but in millions, and the stock fell rapidly. I said to the Viceroy, “Who do you think was the man who was showing this want of confidence in Egyptian finance? It was your own Minister of Finance.”

The Minister of Finance became a "bear" of Egyptian stock to the amount of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions; he borrowed in order to carry on the operation; it was a combined operation; he "beared" the stock, and he raised the wind at the same time, and he raised the wind by the following combinations: he borrowed these $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions from owners of the Stock of 1873; he paid them a commission for borrowing the Stock which he was going to sell in order to destroy the credit of the Government of which he was Finance Minister. He paid a commission. What commission did he pay? 18 per cent. for borrowing the Stock. But I said to the gentleman from the Ministry of Finance who gave me the statements, "Was it a commission of 18 per cent. upon the nominal amount of the stock, or upon the produce?" He said, "Upon the nominal amount of the stock." Then, I said, "At what did you realize it?" "We got 56; that was the average at which we sold the stock." Then, I said, "You really were paying about 30 per cent. for borrowing this stock." The people who lent the money were at no outlay whatever; they only parted with their stock, and they received a commission of 18 per cent. on the nominal amount of the stock. This is the story which I told the Viceroy. But it does not end here; the Minister of Finance sold this stock, as we judged, and as we could see by studying the prices current in January and February, when the transactions took place, at a certain price. The prices never went below a certain figure—it is not material what the figure may be, certainly not below 60—and the sales began, as we found from bankers who had made the sales, at 70. These sales were credited to the Egyptian Government at 56, while they had been made at these other figures. But that was not all; the stock had to be bought back, and when the stock stood at 40, then the Minister of Finance made a contract with a man of straw to buy back the stock at 50. The Viceroy admitted to me in one of the last

interviews, after the Minister of Finance had been dismissed, that this operation which gave them cash to the amount of £1,300,000 had cost them half a million sterling. But in order to give security to these people who had lent the Bonds for these sales at these extraordinary commissions, there was a further outrageous proceeding, which was that the Minister of Finance signed Bonds to the amount of five millions not included in the Convention of the 7th of May. These Bonds he gave as security. He created Bonds which were illegal, which were not included in the Convention. Those Bonds will be withdrawn; but this operation has been an incubus which has been weighing upon Egyptian finance during the last eight months. The Minister of Finance stood in this detestable position, that the more Egyptian Stock fell, the better was the operation which he had made by being a "bear," on behalf of the Government, of this stock. Now I have had this operation so much on my mind during my stay in Egypt that I thought it my duty to tell it to you as a specimen of what had been happening in Egypt. I placed this matter before the Viceroy, and I said that he might draw his own conclusions. These were the operations which were going on in Egypt. The Minister of Finance, I regret to say, was not dismissed from his post on account of financial mal-administration; he was exiled upon a charge of conspiracy against the Viceroy, he was arrested one day, he was shipped off the next, and he is now in exile; but it would have satisfied European public opinion infinitely better if he had been openly tried for his financial mal-administration, and if he had paid a penalty in public for that which he had done. And now, while I have told you of this, let me on the other hand say, that side by side with these atrocious transactions, we found a certain number of Egyptians in office—native Pashas, who represented an honest party and who were anxious for the overthrow of the Minister of

Finance. The Minister of Finance was powerful and he was able, but there was a sigh of relief throughout Egypt when he was dismissed; and I trust that now the honest party will come to the front, that they will have the courage of their opinions, and that we may look forward to better times. We thought it our duty to look to all these points, and no doubt it gave us great power in our negotiations, that we had unearthed these transactions. We asked for two Controllers General. Let me tell you in one word their duties. One of them, the Controller General of Receipts, is to be responsible for the whole of the revenues; he is to see that they are paid in; he is to have the power of nominating all the collectors of revenue throughout Egypt. He is to be responsible that not more is collected than ought to be collected, and he is to see that the sums received are paid over to those who are to receive them. The Controller General of Audit and of Public Debt is to see that no transactions are made which are contrary to the engagements of the Government; he is to superintend the accounts; he is to see that the sums put upon the Budget are only applied to the purposes for which they are intended; and the two Controllers General, together with a Minister of Finance, are to form a Committee, and without these two Controllers General no real financial transaction will be able to take place in Egypt. The control will be centred in the hands of these two men; and the Viceroy I think has hit upon an admirable plan to escape from the difficulty of this control affecting the position of the Minister of Finance; and I am bound to tell you that he has said very little indeed in objection to our guarantees; he accepted them very readily; but he has hit upon the plan of appointing his own son as Minister of Finance, and his Minister of Finance therefore, with the two European Controllers, will really be responsible for the finance of the country. With a young prince in that position the thing will

work infinitely better than it could have worked in any other way. I am glad to be able to tell you that I heard an excellent account of this young prince, who has been appointed Minister of Finance; he already in another capacity had inspired confidence. He is a man of order; and, already in the short time that he has been appointed, he has effected some clearances in the office of the Ministry of Finance.

And now I am glad to say that I touch the last point, but still an important point, namely, that of the constitution of the Commission of the Public Debt. You will remember that it was pointed out that there was no English representative on that Commission. The English Government had refused to appoint. The decree now enacts that an Englishman is to be appointed on that Commission. The English Government will be asked unofficially by the Viceroy to name a Commissioner; but if they refuse (and, for my part, I wish to express no opinion whatever as to whether they ought to accept or refuse—I daresay that the Government of which I was a member would have refused), then the Viceroy has asked me to name some one to him, whom he would at once place upon the Commission. In that respect, therefore, I think, that, knowing the intense anxiety which I must have, that the engagements taken should be carried out, you may rely upon it, that if it should fall to me to have to select the Commissioner, I shall take care to try to find a man who will do justice to the interests of the creditors.

Now, gentlemen, although I might tell you a very great deal more, I have given you, I hope, a clear exposition of the main results of our mission. Again I would say that we cannot presume to think that the scheme is a perfect one. What we had to do was to do the best that could be done under the circumstances. We believe that we have got guarantees stronger than we could have expected to

get when we went to Egypt. We obtained them because we were supported by public opinion, and because we were masters, and had made ourselves masters of the facts of the last ten months. Such is our plan; such are our guarantees; we trust that they will be satisfactory to the body of the Egyptian Bondholders. When we went to Egypt we found a disposition to be unfaithful to engagements; we hope that we have left a disposition to fulfil engagements and to carry out the terms that have been asked for. When we went to Egypt we found France and England not united, but struggling for different financial schemes; we have left English influence and French influence both working together to support the scheme which we have propounded. We found a Minister of Finance, whose doings I have described to you; we have left a Minister of Finance who, being the son of the Viceroy, I trust gives pledges of his good conduct for the future. We cannot guarantee the soundness of our scheme; we have done our best. We did not wish to produce anything merely on paper, but we must leave the result to your generous appreciation, and we must hope that it will ultimately prove a success. (Loud cheers.)

A BONDHOLDER—May I ask a question as to the bonds already presented for conversion; we shall stand, I suppose, where we were?

Mr. GOSCHEN—Yes; no one will have lost anything by having presented his bonds for conversion.

The following resolution was moved by Mr. JERVOISE SMITH, and seconded by Mr. ALEXANDER MATHESON, M.P. "That this Meeting wishes to tender its warmest thanks to the Right Honourable G. J. Goschen, M.P., for his exertions in conducting and concluding, on their behalf, his negotiations with the Egyptian Government for the payment of the debts of the Government, and of His Highness the Khedive; and also to acknowledge the zeal, despatch and

masterly ability with which those negotiations have been brought by him to a successful issue."

The resolution was put to the Meeting by the Chairman and was carried unanimously.

The following resolution was moved by Lord HAMPTON, and seconded by Sir CHARLES FOSTER, Bart., M.P. "That the hearty thanks of this meeting be also given to M. Joubert, the representative of the French Creditors of the Egyptian Government, for his loyal and able co-operation with Mr. Goschen in effecting a settlement, and that the Chairman be instructed to convey these thanks to M. Joubert."

The resolution was put to the Meeting by the Chairman and was carried unanimously.

Mr. GOSCHEN—Gentlemen, let me thank you in my own name, and in that of M. Joubert, for the two resolutions which you have carried; and let me say, with regard to M. Joubert, that it will be an immense satisfaction to him to hear the resolution you have passed. I am glad to say that there is present to-day, or I believe that there is present, M. Hensch, the President of the Comptoir d'Escompte, the establishment charged with carrying out the Unification Decree, and who will be able to communicate personally with M. Joubert, and tell him the manner in which the resolution respecting him has been received. I am glad to say that M. Hensch has come over to London to-day to study and look to the whole of the questions of detail, with regard to regulating the payment of the various coupons, to study those questions from an English point of view, and to make such arrangements as are necessary, with English co-operation, for carrying out the whole of the details of the scheme; and I would answer the question which has been put to me by saying that the holders of the short loans will be replaced precisely in the position in which they were with regard to the dividends. If they have received a portion of the dividend they will receive the balance up to the day when the dividend was due;

if they have not received a portion, then they will receive the whole : but it will be arranged that the dates of the interest of the small loans will be precisely as before, and no one will have forfeited any portion of the interest to which he is entitled.

The following resolution was moved by Mr. GUEDALLA, and seconded by Mr. HARWOOD : " That the warmest thanks of this General Meeting of Egyptian Bondholders be given to the Right Honourable P. Pleydell Bouverie, Chairman, for presiding on this occasion, and to the Council of Foreign Bondholders for taking the initiative in obtaining for the Bondholders the representation of their interests by the Right Honourable George J. Goschen, M.P., and in co-operating with him."

The resolution was put to the Meeting by Mr. GUEDALLA and was carried unanimously.

The resolution having been acknowledged by the Chairman, the Meeting separated.

APPENDIX.

EGYPTIAN BONDS.

REQUISITION TO MR. GOSCHEN.

COUNCIL TO RIGHT HON. G. J. GOSCHEN.

COUNCIL OF FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS,
17, LATE 10, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON,
3rd July, 1876.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE G. J. GOSCHEN, M.P.,
69, PORTLAND PLACE.

SIR,

The variety and complications of the different Egyptian Loans, render it absolutely necessary that English interests should be represented by some man of sufficient influence and known name to secure attention, and to protect those interests during this crisis in Egyptian finance.

A meeting of representatives of the different English loans referred to above, were unanimous in opinion that this delicate and important mission could be trusted to no abler hands than yours, and a deputation from that conference,

after laying the case before you this morning, were glad to find that, within certain limits, you would be willing to accept this responsibility.

The object of this letter is to obtain your formal assent, and to enable you to make such stipulations as, under the circumstances, you may think desirable, which will, in due course, be submitted to the Bondholders.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) HYDE CLARKE,
Secretary.

MR. GOSCHEN TO COUNCIL.

69, PORTLAND PLACE, W.,

4th July, 1876.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 3rd inst., I have to state that, before I could take any responsibility on myself with reference to the protection of the interests of Egyptian Bondholders, I should require to be satisfied that there was a very general wish amongst such Bondholders that I should do so. I do not know what steps would be best for ascertaining the fact, or whether it can be ascertained at all. But I cannot promise to act without being thus satisfied. The responsibility of giving any advice, or taking any steps in the present crisis of Egyptian finance is so great, that nothing could induce me to incur it except an almost unanimous wish on the part of those interested, so far as their views can be made known.

I should add, that I should also think it necessary to be assured that the Contractors and Agents of the various Egyptian Loans brought out in this country cordially and thoroughly approved of the step. In fact, no advantage could come from the course proposed at the Meeting to which you refer, that some one person should represent English interests in this matter, unless it were known that he had the cordial support of all parties.

The stipulations which I further mentioned to the deputation yesterday were :

1. That it must be understood that if I undertake to represent the interests of the Bondholders, I should do so simply with a view of securing, if possible, their more equitable treatment, and advising with regard to the propriety and expediency of accepting or rejecting proposals that may be made by others, but that I should not, under any circumstances whatever, be involved myself in any financial transaction or combination.

If any financial combination, favourable to English Bondholders, should be proposed by English capitalists in whom the Bondholders would have confidence, I should wish to be able at once to consider my functions as at an end.

2. That my position should be entirely honorary. I should also expect that, in any negotiation which might be carried on, of which I was cognisant, no paid agents of any kind should be employed. To speak quite plainly on this subject, what I mean is this—that no money should be made by anybody out of the protection of the interests of English Bondholders.

3. That I can undertake no duties that would interfere in any way with my perfect freedom of political action.

I could not urge any steps on the English Government which, though useful to the Bondholders, I might deem politically inexpedient. I am bound to say that this may fairly be considered by Bondholders as a reason for preferring their interests to be placed in other hands.

4. That I could not undertake, under any circumstances, to go to Egypt.

These, I believe, were the main points to which I, yesterday, referred. I also stated how strongly I felt that the late decree of the Khedive was most inequitable and inconsiderate in its provisions, especially as affecting the holders of the funded debt.

It would be a great satisfaction to me if I could succeed in any degree in mitigating the sacrifices which are asked of the English Creditors of Egypt, and of removing in part the injustice to which they have been exposed, but the difficulties appear to me extreme.

I am, yours very faithfully,
GEORGE J. GOSCHEN.

HYDE CLARKE, Esq.,
17, Moorgate Street.

COUNCIL TO MR. GOSCHEN.

COUNCIL OF FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS,
17, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON, E.C.,
July 19th, 1876.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE J. GOSCHEN, M.P.

SIR,

In reply to the questions which you put to-day, as to the number of Holders in Egyptian Stocks who had signed the documents placed in your hands by the Deputation which waited on you this morning, I am directed to inform you that nearly three thousand Holders of Stock in the various Egyptian Loans have requested you to represent their interests, in the manner and under the stipulations of your letter of the 4th instant.

The almost unanimous expression of opinion by Bond-

holders to whom application was made, four only having expressed any dissent from the proposed course, will it is hoped satisfy you that there is a very general wish amongst the Egyptian Bondholders that you should undertake the protection of their interests.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your obedient Servant.

(Signed) HYDE CLARKE,

Secretary.

MR. GOSCHEN TO COUNCIL.

69, PORTLAND PLACE,

20th July, 1876.

SIR,

Having regard to the large number of Bondholders, who, both at the public meeting held on the 14th inst. at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and individually by their letters, have expressed the wish that I should represent their interests in the manner stated in my letter of the 4th inst., I feel that I am bound to use my utmost efforts on their behalf.

I am deeply sensible of the confidence they have thus placed in me, but in undertaking the difficult task before me, I feel that I ought to remind the Bondholders that where, as in the present case, it appears that some departure from an original contract is unavoidable, no arrangement is likely to be possible which will be entirely satisfactory.

I am, SIR,

Yours very faithfully,

GEORGE J. GOSCHEN.

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
COUNCIL OF FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS.

GENERAL MEETING OF BONDHOLDERS,

Held on the 3rd October, 1876.

Extracted from "THE TIMES," etc.

A GENERAL MEETING of those Egyptian Bondholders who have signed the requisition to the Right Hon. George J. Goschen, M.P., and of the Egyptian Bondholders generally, was held on Tuesday, October 3rd, 1876, at the Cannon-street Hotel. The advertisement of the Council of Foreign Bondholders convening the meeting stated that the meeting was called "at the request of Mr. Goschen, who proposes to make a statement with regard to the present state of affairs." The chair was occupied by the Right Hon. E. P. BOUVERIE, the Chairman of the Council of Foreign Bondholders, and the notice calling the meeting was read by Mr. HYDE CLARKE, the Secretary to the Council. The large hall in which the meeting was held was crowded to excess.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the business of the meeting, said that just two months ago the Right Hon. Mr. Goschen, at the request of a large number of those who were interested in the Securities of the Egyptian Debt, undertook to represent their interests, and to carry on, on their behalf, the negotiations which were then undertaken, with the view of endeavouring to settle the financial difficulties which threatened the condition of Egypt and its Debt; and during the past two months Mr. Goschen had been busily occupied in looking after the interests of the bondholders, and those were

essentially bound up with the prosperity and welfare of the country with which they had been brought into financial connection. (Cheers.) It was essential, for the continued advancement and prosperity of Egypt, that her finances should be put in a sound and stable condition, and if they took the trouble to look at the papers and documents, which were open to everyone after the report of Mr. Cave, they would see that if the financial affairs of Egypt were treated in a sound and judicious way, she ought to be a solvent debtor, and that if her affairs were properly and judiciously treated, there ought to be a successful issue to the difficulties which had lately arisen. (Cheers.) But in order to attain that end, it was necessary that the interests of the bondholders should be efficiently and powerfully represented, and for that purpose they ought to employ a gentleman to act on their behalf whose abilities were known and admitted, whose skill and experience were undoubted, and whose eminent position gave him all the authority which long official and commercial experience entitled him to claim. (Cheers.) If they could induce Mr. Goschen to continue to act, they would have in that gentleman a plenipotentiary whose services they ought to be thankful to secure; but in order to enable Mr. Goschen to bring the present delicate negotiations to a successful issue, that gentleman must feel that he was supported by the cordial and unanimous sympathy of the gentlemen interested. (Cheers.)

The Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, M.P., on rising, was greeted with hearty cheers. He said he would state at once the special reason why he wished that day to meet the Egyptian Bondholders, and to state, as far as he was able, the present position of affairs. They had had but a short notice of this meeting; but he would tell them why the notice was short. The special reason why he was induced to meet the holders of the various Egyptian Loans that day was this, that a few days ago he received an invitation from the Viceroy of Egypt to proceed to Egypt, and in the telegram the Viceroy

had expressed an opinion that if he (Mr. Goschen) were on the spot to inquire into the situation, and into the possibilities of the financial state of Egypt, they would be able to arrive at an arrangement which would be compatible both with the budget of Egypt, and with a due regard to the claims of the Bondholders. (Cheers.) At the same time that the Viceroy wrote this despatch, he also sent an invitation to the representative of the creditors in France. Now, the Bondholders were aware that when he first undertook to represent them some two months ago, he warned them that he could not undertake to proceed to Egypt; he stated this frankly in the first instance, and it was a kind of condition of the bargain between them. But he had now had this great matter in hand for some time; the interests involved were enormous; the situation was extremely critical, and he had had the opportunity of seeing what vast misery would be caused in England, Scotland, and Ireland, by any decided act of bankruptcy on the part of Egypt. He had seen how these interests affected thousands of people, and knowing, as he said just now, how critical the situation was, he felt that he ought not to hesitate to accept the invitation of the Viceroy of Egypt, provided (and the Bondholders would appreciate the proviso) that he felt there was a fairly unanimous feeling that the Bondholders wished to entrust the negotiations to him. (Cheers.) He need scarcely say that it was to him, personally, a matter of deep regret that he should have to leave England, even for a little time at a very interesting moment—(hear, hear)—but, at the same time, he had undertaken to discharge the task which the Bondholders had confided to him to the best of his ability, and if he understood that it was the fairly unanimous view of the Bondholders that he should undertake this mission, he should be prepared, in forty-eight hours from the present time, to start for Egypt. (Loud cheers.) Now, perhaps, they would allow him, as it were, to show them his mind a little upon the present situation, and explain briefly, in the first instance,

the delay which had occurred. He himself had lamented that delay on account of the grievous suspense which many of them, in fact, all of them, had suffered ; he had lamented it because many of them had, during that time, been kept out of dividends which they very seriously needed ; but, on the other hand, there had been, for the general interests, some advantage in the delay, and he did not think it had been injurious to the Bondholders at large. The cause of the delay was this : a holder of a bill on the private estate of the Viceroy, when his bill was not paid, took his case into the new International Tribunals which had been founded in Egypt, and he obtained a judgment in his favour, and execution was granted to him, but the execution was resisted. Now, these International Tribunals, having been founded by the Great Powers, the Viceroy referred to the Great Powers the difficulties which had arisen, and the practical point which he thought he might say was referred to the Great Powers was this—was the authority of the International Tribunals to be maintained or not? (Hear, hear.) That question had been under the consideration of the various Governments concerned, and the general opinion and belief at present was (although he had no official information upon the subject) that the Great Powers would maintain the authority of the International Tribunals. (Cheers.) Whilst this case was pending, as the whole of the debts of the Daira were included in the unification scheme, it was impossible to come to any final arrangement ; and it was his own opinion, and an opinion which he had stated in very strong terms to the Viceroy in his communications, and to his Minister, that it was most undesirable to deal piecemeal with the question—that as the whole of the debts had been dealt with in the decree of the 7th of May, that, therefore, the whole of the modifications ought to be made at one and the same time, so that the Bondholders might know where they really were. He pointed out that continual modifications would be

injurious to all parties, and to all interests alike, and therefore he considered that a final settlement could not be arrived at until this question to which he had referred had been dealt with. But now he would point out another reason, or, rather, *the* reason, why he considered this delay had not been injurious to the Bondholders. It was to the advantage of the creditors of Egypt, as he believed it to be to the advantage of Egypt herself, that the authority of the International Tribunals should be upheld; and there was this particular point which touches the interests of the creditors—that in the decree of conversion of the 7th of May, which contained much which he had protested against in the strongest manner—in that decree there was a clause of very considerable value, namely, that if the Commissioners who had been appointed to collect and apply the special revenues to the payment of interest, had any breach of arrangement to complain of against the Minister of Finance or the financial administration, they were entitled to bring that breach of arrangement before these International Tribunals. For his part, that seemed to be a principle which had been assented to by the Viceroy, and which, in the interests of the Bondholders, he (Mr. Goschen) should not be prepared to surrender. (Cheers.) It was important that any Commissioners, whoever they might be, who might be appointed to collect the revenues to be applied to the payment of the interest of the Debt, should be at liberty to carry any legal claims which they might have against the financial administration before those International Courts, whose authority was now, he understood, to be maintained. Therefore, he trusted that by the time he reached Egypt it would be ascertained that the collection of that portion of the revenue which might be assigned to the Bondholders might be in the hands of men who, if they had complaints to make, or breaches of faith to complain of, would be enabled to carry them to tribunals whose decision would be respected. (Cheers.) During the delay which had occurred,

he had endeavoured to do his best to arrive at an understanding with the creditors in France, and he would point out what he considered sound policy in that respect. What was one of their chief complaints? He knew it was one of his chief complaints that the decree of the 7th of May was issued as an arbitrary act by the Khedive, without any previous concert or arrangement with his creditors, and no opportunity was given to the representatives of any of the loans to plead their cases before it was too late. The Bondholders woke up one morning and found that pledged securities had been diverted, that the sinking-fund had been abolished, and a new stock created, and the Bondholders had had no opportunity whatever of protesting. He had pointed out to the Viceroy how detrimental to any State such an act must be, and the Minister of Finance replied that it was not a fair accusation to make after all that had passed before the Decree was carried out. It was only in a telegram that the Minister had stated this; but what he understood the Minister to allude to were the previous negotiations with groups of English capitalists, the remonstrances made by our consular agent, and the protest of Mr. Rivers Wilson, and that as these protests were fairly representative of English opinion, it could not be said that the interests of England were neglected. But that, in his opinion, was no answer whatever. The representatives of the English bondholders had not been consulted until it was too late. (Cheers.) Now, he would point out this very important point—that in the Egyptian Government there seemed to be a kind of general opinion that these contracts and decrees were made with groups of capitalists and bankers, and not so much with the general public at large. (Cheers.) But what he had endeavoured to bring home to the mind of the Viceroy was this—that his liabilities and his Decrees were not engagements to the groups of bankers and capitalists with whom he might have been in communication, but that he had undertaken liabilities and engagements

to the public at large. He had explained to the Viceroy that the Egyptian stock in England was distributed over a vast area, and in thousands of families, and that in each one of those families the conduct of the Egyptian Government was jealously watched; and he thought he might also not unfairly point out to the Viceroy that it was the aggregate of the opinion formed in this manner which, in the end, formed the public opinion of the country, and that it was an opinion which ought not, and could not, be neglected. (Cheers.) Under those circumstances, he thought that they would see there was one point to insist upon with the Viceroy, namely, that all arbitrary acts must in future be avoided. (Loud cheers.) Now, he had approached his negotiation in that spirit. He did not think it would have been a wise course to have gone to the Viceroy and have said to him—“Put your pen through the Decree which you passed a month ago.” (Hear, hear.) Under that Decree new liabilities had been created, and new engagements undertaken; and if the Viceroy had listened to the counsel that the Decree should have been abolished, what security was there that three months later other counsels would not have prevailed, and that the Viceroy would not have put his pen through other decrees, and Egyptian finance be in even a worse position than before? (Hear, hear.) It appeared to him that the only solution for the Egyptian difficulty, and the way to save the Bondholders’ interests and secure a continuance of the payment of interest, was to come to a unanimous arrangement, if possible, between all the various classes of creditors, so that they might approach the Viceroy with at least the moral support of the two Governments, and not consent to one set of creditors being played off against another set of creditors, or one Government against another Government. (Cheers.) It was this union between the countries and the two sets of creditors which, in his judgment, alone could lead to a satisfactory settlement. Well, the Viceroy knew that this was, his (Mr. Goschen’s) opinion, and, knowing this, the Viceroy

had invited him to visit Egypt, and had, at the same time, invited a representative of the French creditors.

He would now read to the meeting a portion of a letter which he had recently addressed to the Viceroy, which would show clearly what his opinions were:—

“ In the meantime, I am unfortunately unable to do much more than to submit to your Highness the main objections which have been taken to the decree of the 7th of May. They are briefly as follows:—Firstly, against the increase in the total amount of the Debt since the Report of Mr. Cave. Secondly, against the bonification of 25 per cent. to the holders of the Floating Debt, which had been one of the principal causes of that increase. Thirdly, against the withdrawal of the securities from the holders of the old Funded Debts, and their application to the new Unified Debt of 91 millions. Fourthly, to the very inadequate compensation granted to the holders of the short loans. The plans which I shall have the honour to submit will aim at meeting these objections, as far as may be possible, though I am quite aware it may not be in the power of your Highness entirely to reverse what has been done. I ought to add that, knowing the engagements which your Highness has undertaken, I have thought it right and expedient to place myself in communication, in the first instance, with those to whom the carrying out of the unification scheme has been entrusted. The English Bondholders felt deeply aggrieved that the Decree of the 7th of May was passed without any previous notification being made or any opportunity being given them to place their views before the Government of your Highness. A fresh blow would be given to Egyptian credit if a similar course were to be pursued with regard to others, in the preparation of a new scheme altering that of the 7th of May. Bearing this point in mind, and being anxious to avoid the possibility of any breach of faith being brought against the Egyptian Government, as the result of any plan recommended by me, I am endeavouring to induce the French group to give their

previous concurrence to certain modifications of the late Decree, which, if we come to an agreement, we shall jointly propose to your Highness. I have made considerable progress in those negotiations, and have every reason to hope that as soon as the Governments concerned have communicated to your Highness their views as to the judgment given in the case of the Daira, we shall be in a position to lay a plan before your Highness which would reduce the total of the public debt in Egypt, modify the effect of the bonus of 25 per cent. granted to the holders of the floating debt, improve the position of the holders of the short loans, and give some recognition to the principle of special securities being dealt with for the advantage of those to whom they were pledged."

That was generally, without going into details, what he had written to the Viceroy of Egypt; he had stated that he hoped to be able to submit a plan, and he was now able to say, so far as an understanding with the French creditors was concerned, that he was able to submit a plan. (Cheers.) And now he must make a large appeal to the confidence and consideration of the Bondholders. He knew they were all so deeply interested that they must wish to know what those plans might be; but let him point out to them that it would be some ten days before he arrived in Egypt, and if, in that room, they were to discuss any particular plan, the whole of those ten days might be employed by other persons in frustrating the whole or any portion of that plan, and he should stand to be shot at while he should be travelling by railway or by sea, and totally unable to give any information. (Hear, hear.) They could see how delicate the negotiations were, and how many interests were involved; and he did venture to state most strongly that it would be against all prospects of the success of the negotiations if, in that room, they were to endeavour to discuss or settle what course should be pursued or what plans should be adopted. (Cheers.) They must remember that he might have to modify what he might be

able to ask, when he was on the spot, and (as the Viceroy said) be able to take cognisance of the situation on the spot, and hence the appeal which he must make for their confidence. He had watched the feeling of English opinion, and the feelings of the bondholders, as they had been expressed to him, far enough, he thought, to know this—that there was a unanimous opinion that they would not be prepared to abate from their just claims merely for the purpose of enabling the Egyptian Government to spend more money or to place more sums at the disposal of the Viceroy; but if they were prepared to surrender any portion it would only be on this ground—that Egypt could not afford to pay more, and that if she did pay more, financial confusion would again ensue in a few years. (“Hear, hear.”) What he understood the bondholders to be unanimous upon was this—that they wanted proper security to be taken that all the available revenues should, without fail, and under all circumstances, and beyond all doubt, find their way to the pockets of those who have lent money to the Egyptian Government. (Cheers.) The Viceroy had shown that, in some respects, he was willing to place himself under some financial control; he had consented to the appointment of three commissioners, nominated by France, Austria, and Italy, to whom the revenues were to be paid, but he had had the opportunity (and perhaps it was an advantage—a further advantage of the delay which had occurred), of seeing what imperfections there were in that Commission and in that Decree, and clearly there were imperfections. For instance, the Commission was appointed for a time and in such a way that the Commission was not permanent, and there was no clause in the decree which would prevent the Commission being broken up. Now he thought they must demand that the Commission must last as long as the debt lasted. (Cheers.) Then it appeared that there were scarcely sufficient provisions for insuring the immediate remittance of the funds collected to England, and the bondholders should

demand that the funds should be at once sent, without any question, to the Bank of England or to the Bank of France. The receipts during the last two months had not been what was expected, or what it was thought they should be, and he considered it would be his duty to examine most rigorously whether there had been any openings by which the funds, which, under the contracts, should have reached this country, had escaped the Commissioners. (Cheers.) And it was, perhaps, a rather remarkable circumstance that the sudden falling-off in the revenue, he believed in most of the branches, had occurred at the same time when various rumours and feelers had been put out with respect to a reduction from 7 per cent. to 5 per cent. (Hear, hear.) All this would require most careful examination. Referring to the desirability of the presence of an English representative of the Bondholders on the commission, the Viceroy might state that the opportunity was given for the English Government to appoint such a Commissioner, but such Commissioner had not been nominated. He did not believe that the English Government would nominate a representative—it was contrary, generally, to English views and habits; but that was no reason why there should not be a representative of English Bondholders on that Commission. He had had communication on that point, and he thought he had authority for saying that the Government of France would not object to the appointment of such a Commissioner, but, on the contrary, would assist the English Bondholders to obtain the appointment of such a representative upon the nomination of any competent body of the Bondholders or otherwise, and would work with the English Bondholders to secure the nomination of an Englishman upon the Commission which was to receive the special revenues. They must not budge from that point, namely, that the revenues should be paid over to independent men, who would at once remit the funds to England. (Cheers.) The success of such an arrangement as that to which he had referred depended upon

the Bondholders in France and England working together, with the view of obtaining from the Egyptian Government securities of the kind to which he had referred ; and he had no doubt that the Viceroy, who was an enlightened man, would see that whole securities were better than half securities, and would perceive, in any modified arrangement that might be made, that if he wished the credit of his country to be raised, it would be necessary to give such securities as he had pointed out. (Cheers.) Before sitting down he would ask them to be on their guard, during his absence, on one or two points. Let him place frankly before them one determination which he had come to, and let them take that seriously into consideration before they empowered him to take this mission, and that was that he would not be a party to bolstering up Egyptian credit by any fair report if he found the state of things there unsatisfactory. (Cheers.) He had nothing to do, and the *bonâ fide* Bondholders had nothing to do, with the ups and downs of prices, and he must endeavour to make an arrangement, not which would send up prices, but which would give solidity to the stock ; therefore if he found the state of things unsatisfactory, he must, however disagreeable might be the task, frankly tell the Bondholders how the land lay in Egypt. (Loud cheers.) Again, let him ask them, during his absence in Egypt, to be exceedingly careful as to what they believed. Rumours would be put in circulation from Cairo and other parts, but he would ask them not to let their hopes be raised by what they might hear, neither to let their hopes be dashed by what they might hear. They must remember that rumours were often put out as feelers, and therefore he asked them not to believe too many of the rumours which they might hear. (Cheers.) There was one point upon which he would give an explicit answer. He had been asked by numbers of Bondholders what they should do with regard to presenting their stocks for conversion. Hitherto he should have considered that his hands would have been weakened in the

negotiations if English Bondholders had presented their stocks for conversion in large amounts, because it would have expressed a willingness to accept terms which he was unwilling to accept, and against which it was his duty to protest; but he thought that now negotiations had advanced to such a stage that his authority in the matter, and the authority of others, would not suffer by the presentation of bonds for conversion; and, as regarded the general interests of the Bondholders, it was fairly a matter of indifference whether the bonds were presented for conversion or not. Each Bondholder must look at his own individual case in considering whether or not he should send in his stock for conversion. He then pointed out that the bonds were to be lodged with the Comptoir d'Escompte, which was a sound and honourable establishment of high standing, acting under the Decree of the 7th of May, and he was informed that the mechanism under which the conversion took place was such that the receipts specified the particular class of bonds which were taken in. He also stated that those who had already sent in their bonds for conversion would not be in any way prejudiced in the event of better terms being obtained. In conclusion, he said he could not express the sense of responsibility which he felt in representing such large interests—interests which, if betrayed or neglected, would cause so much misery and so much ruin in this country. (Loud cheers.)

It was then “ moved by Mr. Biddulph Martin, seconded by Sir Henry Drummond Woolf, M.P., that this meeting request the Right Hon. George J. Goschen, M.P., to proceed to Egypt on their behalf, and do hereby give him full authority to act for them in such arrangements as he may think fit to make with his Highness the Viceroy and the Egyptian Government with respect to the Egyptian Debt.”

The resolution was carried, amidst loud cheers, without a single dissident.

After a few words from Mr. Goschen, acknowledging the unanimity with which the resolution was carried, the unanimous thanks of the meeting was given to the Right Hon. Edward Pleydell-Bouverie for presiding, and the meeting broke up with three cheers for Mr. Goschen.

OPINION
ON
THE EASTERN QUESTION.

BY
GENERAL ROSTISLAV FADÉEFF,
OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

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LATE SECRETARY TO HER MAJESTY'S EMBASSY, AND CONSUL, AT ST. PETERSBURG.

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CONTENTS.



CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—INTRODUCTION	5
II.—THE EASTERN QUESTION	10
III.—AUSTRIA—THE CHIEF OPPONENT OF RUSSIA	23
IV.—THE RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA, AND THE FOREIGN ALLIANCES OF RUSSIA	34
V.—THE SLAVE ALLIES OF RUSSIA	47
VI.—THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE POLISH AND EASTERN QUESTIONS	65
VII.—POLAND MUST BE ADMITTED INTO THE SLAVE FAMILY	71
VIII.—THE POLICY AND FUTURE OF THE SLAVE RACES ..	80
IX.—WHAT SHOULD BE THE POLICY OF RUSSIA?	92

OPINION

ON

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE of my principal objects in publishing a work on the 'Armed Forces of Russia' was to direct public attention to military matters. That object has been attained. The periodical press has taken up the subject, and the wide differences of opinion between my reviewers and my book compel me to define more clearly those sides of the question which have given rise to misunderstanding. Although the discussion has not yet lost its original literary character, I nevertheless think that an idea, if sensible in itself, has a great chance of being converted into action in the course of time.

I do not desire to speak here of misunderstandings that are purely military, but I am bound to explain those which are raised by the very basis of the work in question, namely, by my estimate of the armed forces which I consider to be necessary to Russia.

Although this question is substantially a political one, yet it is the foundation of every military consi-

deration. The quantity of troops which a State requires regulates the general features of its military organization. As the relations between the numerical strength of the population and the quantity of troops which it can furnish on a war footing become altered, the military system of the State should be altered likewise. At the same time, every State determines the forces that it requires by a variety of considerations. No State can be guided in that respect by comparative statistics alone; it must measure the degree of its efforts by the geographical conditions of the country and its political relations, temporary as well as permanent.

After the abstract question, What force can a State supply? comes the practical question, What force does it require?

It is impossible to give an answer even approximately correct to the latter question without first arriving at a clear understanding of the political relations that may cause the State to be drawn into a war, and that will at the same time point to the seat of such a war and to the efforts which it will demand on the part of the State. My estimate of the forces which Russia would in such a case require is founded on a well-matured study of the political, or rather the historical, relations of Russia. The idea on which that estimate is founded is as follows:—Not one of the European questions in which Russia is interested, and more especially the chief or Eastern Question, can be terminated by a merely local war—for instance, the Eastern Question by a war on the Balkan peninsula.

The late war was in this respect an accidental and exceptional event, not likely to recur. The collision of Russia with Europe, or with any portion of it, can only be decided by a war on the western frontier; and the international power of Russia should therefore be measured, not only principally, but almost exclusively, by the force which it can place on that frontier, remaining at the same time in a defensive position on her other boundaries, wherever such an attitude may be found necessary.

This argument, which I consider to be beyond all dispute, has given rise to misunderstandings. Russians have replied that no other question but the Eastern is capable of giving rise to a coalition against Russia, for the question of Poland is of no essential importance to Europe; that the Eastern Question, as proved by past events, will not lead to a collision on the western frontier; that the Allies of 1854 did not undertake a war on the Continent, as England was not disposed to alter the map of Europe on account of Eastern affairs—a policy which may be expected in the future, &c.

I might answer these objections in a few words:—Firstly, A coalition against Russia is so far possible that, in 1863, when Napoleon endeavoured to form an offensive alliance against Russia at Vienna, a coalition was very nearly brought about. Austria hesitated a few days, and if her Government had acted with greater decision (there was no lack of good-will) a formidable alliance would have been established between France, Austria, and Italy, against Russia.

behind the back of Prussia, then of small consequence and little sure of her own strength ; and this alliance would have had no reference to the Eastern Question. Every disturbance in Poland has threatened, and will still threaten, Russia with a similar danger. Secondly, It is true that England did not wish to connect the Polish with the Eastern Question, but not so far as to acknowledge herself vanquished and to relinquish her demands in the East, in order to escape from the Polish Question. It would, moreover, have depended, not on the Western Powers, but on Austria, to convert a maritime war into a war on land, for she alone could have opened to the Allies an approach to the western frontier of Russia. Thirdly, There was no land campaign in 1856, only because Russia retired before it, and gave up, not only her recent demands, but also her old advantages, in consequence of the Austrian Ultimatum ; the whole burden of the war would otherwise have fallen on the western frontier. I took the late war as an exemplification in my inquiry into the armed forces of Russia, and it is evident that I was compelled to consider literally not that which actually happened, but that which must undoubtedly have happened if Russia had continued to insist upon her demands.

I had in view not an accidental or purposeless war, such as that of 1853-1856, but a war well considered, with means calculated beforehand to be sufficient for the attainment of the object in view.

For many readers this explanation would have been

sufficient, but it has not yet removed the source of misunderstanding between my book and its readers. My arguments respecting the military forces of Russia were based on a personal, but firmly established view of the military and political requirements of my country. I did not consider it necessary to develop that view, logically, in my work. The elementary and the practical bases, such as the special importance of a western army, seemed to me self-evident and synonymous, from whatever point of view they might be regarded. The misunderstandings into which my reviewers, and consequently my readers, have fallen, compel me to speak out. I cannot go into details, nor shall I present any new facts, but I shall prove the correlation between the facts from which my view has been derived.

CHAPTER II.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

I SHOULD wish to concentrate the attention of my readers on the Eastern Question. It is in reality one of the most vital questions to Russia, since it is the only one that threatens her permanently with a hostile coalition. As during the prevalence of a strong epidemic all other diseases bear an impress of its symptoms, so also in the matter of the Eastern Question, so long as it remains unsettled, all the causes of collision between Russia and the West issue from it or merge into it; it is the bond of union between all political questions. To agree on the exact significance of the Eastern Question, and on the determination of the fundamental obstacles that have not as yet permitted its solution in a Russian, *i. e.* in a just sense, is to agree substantially on the military and political positions of Russia, and consequently on the importance of this or that basis of military operations.

The misunderstandings above alluded to have indeed arisen from a difference of opinion in regard to the limits and bearing of the Eastern Question.

Those limits have greatly expanded during the

course of the present century. Of the old Eastern Question only the name remains; everything else, its substance and its limits, are different. We may measure with great accuracy the internal growth of this question by the relations in which Austria has stood towards Russia whenever the latter has been at war with Turkey. No barometer can record the state of the atmosphere so correctly as the degree of enmity shown by Austria towards Russia expresses the condition of the Eastern Question; for to her the question is not a political one, as it is to France and England, but a home question, as vital to her as to Russia, but in an opposite sense.

In 1786 an alliance was concluded between Catherine II. and Joseph II. for the conquest, partition, and regeneration of European Turkey. That alliance was the last expression of an idea which had occupied the mind of Europe for three centuries, namely, the expulsion of the infidel barbarians from her soil, an idea that was not unalloyed with certain personal interests. The identity of the Russian religion with that of the people of the Balkan at that time signified much to the Turkish rayahs, but little to Europe; the blood relationship between those races and Russia was of no significance to anyone, for the modern spirit of nationalities was then unknown. Russia gave up to Austria, *en bloc*, the orthodox Slaves of Servia and Bosnia, in return for a promise of assistance in the restoration of the Byzantine Empire. There was no thought then of any other successor to Turkey. The Slaves were divided, like chattels, between the

Germans and the Greeks. On such conditions it was possible for the views of Austria to be identical with those of Russia.

In 1807, however, Austria took a different view of the matter, in consequence of the unexpected and successful rising of the Servians. How could a State, populated by nineteen millions of enthralled Slaves, view with equanimity these new Turkish successors, and where, moreover?—along the frontier of Croatia and the Voevodina. In her actions Austria then followed that new policy on the Eastern Question, which she has since undeviatingly pursued. The Cabinet of Vienna employed at that time all the means at its disposal in order to destroy the alliance between France and Russia, which threatened Austria with only one danger—but one that she could not tolerate—namely, concessions by France on the Eastern Question. In order to avoid such an arrangement, rather than for any other reason, Austria first threw herself into a war with Napoleon, then gave him an arch-duchess, and made an alliance with him.

She did not, however, succeed in preventing the liberation of Servia. The Emperor Alexander, who was not under the influence of Metternich at that time, remained firm. But we know what took place afterwards. When feelings of humanity and of shame before their own people inclined all the European Governments, even the Government of England, in favour of the Greeks, Austria alone remained stubborn, and long after kept a drag upon Russia, in the name of the Holy Alliance. It might have been supposed

that the " great idea " of restoring the Greek Empire, and still less the first step towards so distant an object, would not frighten the nephew of Joseph II.; but during the thirty years that elapsed after the Austro-Russian alliance against the Turks, Austria began to see clearly her way to the settlement of the Eastern Question. Where others spoke of Greeks, she already thought of Servians and Bulgarians. When at last the patience of the Russian Government became exhausted, and the late Emperor led his army beyond the Danube, Austria, notwithstanding the Holy Alliance, made the greatest efforts to raise against Russia such a coalition as she succeeded in forming twenty-five years later. She was incomparably more decisive in her action than England; each ill success of the Russian arms was celebrated at Vienna as a patriotic triumph. On that occasion it was only the confidence of Charles X. in the promise of the Emperor Nicholas not to destroy Turkey, and the friendly family relations between Prussia and Russia, that saved us from a hostile alliance.

Since that period the actual condition of affairs has become daily more clear. Long before the Crimean War, Europe, by the voice of Austria, inveighed against Pan-Slavism. The events of 1848, which proved the vitality of the Austro-Slave populations, could not, of course, have had the effect of recommending the Slaves of Turkey to the sympathy of the dominant classes and races of the Austrian Empire. The secret negotiations which preceded the Crimean

War are as yet but little known.* It is, however, beyond a doubt, that Austria endeavoured to remove the causes of quarrel in 1853 under a feeling of fear, until she became convinced of the readiness of France to risk a war, and that she began to fan the flames as soon as she had obtained that conviction. How can it be admitted that the newly improvised Emperor of the French, who had only just raised the banner of the Bonapartes, so dangerous to Europe, would have ventured even on the first threatening demonstrations which gradually brought about the war—a war that nobody desired—without knowing positively that Austria was with him, *i.e.* that the Holy Alliance would not be arrayed against him? Outwardly, that alliance, as far as Russia and Austria were concerned, appeared still firm; Prussia, although dissatisfied with the events of 1851, would doubtlessly not have wavered between her old allies and Bonapartist France, had outward appearances proved realities; and the French, instead of invading the Crimea, might have been obliged to defend themselves in Champagne. No one believed in Russian plans of conquest, and therefore, the Northern Powers being unanimous, it was impossible to reckon upon England. Had the Holy Alliance spoken loudly at that time, and it had every right so to speak, knowing how innocent Russia was of the perfidy of which she was accused, England would immediately have drawn back, leaving her ally of the hour to get out of his

* Except the negotiations with England, which did not take the initiative in the matter.

troubles the best way he could : unless support had first been secured in the opposite camp, the French demonstrations of 1853 would have been a senseless risk. It cannot therefore be doubted that the moral instigator of the coalition of 1854 was Austria, not France, notwithstanding the deceptive appearance of facts. Austria of course found it to her advantage to employ others to take the chestnuts out of the fire ; but it was she that untied the hands of the Allies, by demanding the withdrawal of the Russian army beyond the Pruth, and by shielding Turkey with her troops. It was she, also, who at the last moment decided the war by throwing into the scales the weight of an army of three hundred thousand men ; and it was she that was most obdurate at the conclusion of peace.

It is very clear why Austria delayed taking a final decision in the late war—a delay that placed the seat of war in the Crimea, not on the Vistula. In the first place, Austria was then still the historical monarchy of the Hapsburgs, and Russia was necessary to her for her German and Italian interests ; she did not wish to hasten the final rupture with Russia, because she hoped to attain her objects by an armed neutrality alone ; and in this she succeeded.*

Secondly, between the years 1853–1856 there was not the slightest mention of a *solution* of the Eastern Question, except in the verses of Homiakof ; the quarrel related to details only of secondary importance.

* The first Austrian Despatch to the Russian Cabinet after the Treaty of Paris invited attention to the disturbed state of Italian affairs.

This was, however, sufficient to cause Austria to assume a hostile position, notwithstanding the danger of losing that support of Russia, which was so necessary to her in other matters with which she is no longer connected. What, then, would be the consequences, if the Eastern Question should now come to a *final solution*? The same mistake cannot be made more than twice, for that would be setting aside the results of experience; and since the time that Austria first understood thoroughly the substance of the Eastern Question, adopting towards it a well-defined system of policy, Russia has twice experienced the impossibility not only of settling, but even of improving to the slightest extent, the affairs of the Balkan peninsula without Austria. In 1829 the Russian army reached the Sea of Marmora, but only after a distinct pledge had been given that the articles of peace would concern Greek affairs alone, within limits previously laid down. Although it stood before Constantinople, the army was not able to liberate Candia. We were not able to make any advance whatever in 1854. In both cases the impediments were not in front, but in our rear.

It is generally considered in Russia that France and England are the principal obstacles to an armed intervention in Turkish affairs. But in reality, however much they might desire it, France and England are not in a position to defend European Turkey against Russia, provided the hands of Russia are untied on the western frontier. It is a matter of impossibility to struggle, by landing forces, against a Power of equal

strength, which has open access overland into the disputed country. Such a struggle is impossible, both in respect to time and to numbers. Of what avail would be all the means of maritime transport against an army of 200,000 men acting continuously? In 1854 the Allies employed a part of the winter and the whole of the spring in transporting 60,000 soldiers to Turkey; they then required a considerable time for the organization of their waggon-train; until June they were chained to the sea-coast, and they had not acquired mobility even by the end of that month. Their forces in the Crimea grew to the dimensions of a numerous army only by the gradual transport of fresh troops during the course of a whole year. Meanwhile the Russian army requires only six weeks, and even less, to march from the Danube to Constantinople, provided, of course, it be sufficiently numerous for the blockade of fortresses in the rear, during a forward movement, that shall also be as far as possible uninterrupted. In dealing with the Turks, a war may be pushed on as rapidly as the transport train can be made to advance. It is to be presumed that the war will support itself on the Balkan peninsula, provided the rapidity of the campaign does not permit the enemy to devastate methodically the country, which, under such circumstances, would of course not submit to him without opposition. Hitherto, following old traditions, Russia has fought in European Turkey step by step, besieging fortresses, to the astonishment of Europe, and without the justification of an unavoidable military necessity. In 1829, however, there was a political

reason for such a plan of campaign ; it was necessary to secure, as far as possible, the rear of the Russian army against any sudden hostile attack on the part of Austria.

In order to settle the fate of European Turkey, in spite of the Maritime Powers, it will be sufficient for 150,000 troops to reach the Bosphorus, *i. e.* that 250,000 men, on the broadest calculation, should reach the Danube. There can be no difficulty in supplying these numbers, even with our present military organization, allowing also for a sufficient and satisfactory occupation of the shores of the Baltic and Black Seas, and for the employment of 50,000 active troops on the side of the Caucasus. Russia can always forestall the land forces of her Western opponents, not only in the Balkans but even at Constantinople. Even if they should succeed, after considerable difficulty, in meeting the Russian army in front of that capital with a force like that which, after the lapse of many months, they got together in 1854 at Varna, 60,000 Europeans, supported by any number of Turks, would not be able to defeat a Russian army of 150,000 men. Moreover, there would be no regular Turkish troops in existence at such a time : they would have been dispersed earlier in Europe and in Asia. The Straits would fall into the hands of the captors of Constantinople ; their fortifications could not hold out against a land force ; and the entrances into the Sea of Marmora, once occupied and properly defended, any serious attempt from seaward to dispute the possession of Turkey would become almost impossible. The largest

force that has ever yet been landed was the army of the Crimea, which consisted of 60,000 troops, without cavalry or waggon-train, and with but a small proportion of artillery. The landing was crowned with success in consequence of two special reasons, namely, the shortness of the voyage (only thirty-six hours), and the numerical inferiority—to the extent of one-half—of our troops on shore. But a landing in the face of superior numbers, or of an enemy of equal strength, abundantly supplied with warlike resources, would lead to destruction. The army of Wellington, transported in ships, supplied from sea, and having a strong place of refuge at the mouth of the Tagus, maintained its footing in Spain against the superior, although divided, forces of the French, only because the country was for that army; but imagine the opposite position: could a French army, between 1807 and 1812, surrounded by a national insurrection, have held its ground in Spain against superior English forces?—and such would be exactly the position of the European allies in Turkey, if Russia acted with decision. Indeed, were Russia to act with promptitude and decision, those allies would not in all probability be found in Turkey at all. Were the Maritime Powers to resolve on defending Turkey, without having the co-operation of Austria, they would defend it only with their naval forces, and only with such a number of land troops as they could carry on board their fleet without inconvenience; but they would never risk their army. Many are led into error by the fact that the allies of 1854 were able to carry the

war into Russia, and to maintain themselves there. But how were they able to effect this? Simply by taking up a strong position on the coast, which they succeeded in fortifying before a sufficient force could be collected against them. There are many similar positions on the Turkish coast; but it would be impossible to save the Turkish dominions by encamping a small force on a sea-shore. In reality, France and England can as little protect European Turkey against Russia with their land forces as they can protect Canada or Mexico against the Americans.

The difficulty is this, that it is impossible for Russia to carry on a war on the Balkan peninsula without the permission of Austria, and that permission she can, under no circumstances, obtain. Look at the map. Russia can reach European Turkey only by one road—through the gate formed by the south-east angle of the Carpathians and the mouth of the Danube: the key of that gate is in the hands of Austria. By crossing the Danube, or even the Pruth, a Russian army would expose her rear to Austria. In this awkward position the first threatening demonstration on the part of Russia's good neighbour would compel the army to beat a hasty retreat, as in 1854. The Lower Danube is accessible only with an Austrian passport. In relation to Russia the geographical position of European Turkey may be compared to a strong chest, of which Austria forms the lid; without lifting that lid it is impossible to get anything out of the chest. Russia has had sufficient experience of that.

It was rumoured in 1854 that Prince Paskevitch

strongly represented to the late Emperor that, once resolved on a war with Turkey, it was necessary, above all, to prepare for a war with Austria. He affirmed that the Eastern Question could be solved only at Vienna, not in Turkey. Events have proved the correctness of the views of that celebrated warrior.

While Russia held possession of the Black Sea, an attempt might have been made to break open the chest from the other side, *i.e.* to knock out the bottom of it by a landing in the Bosphorus. The result would have been a rising of the entire Christian population, the paralyzing of Turkey during the following months, and, probably, her final dissolution; but in whose favour? The seizure of Constantinople and the Straits would not settle that question. It would have to be settled by a war on land, against a coalition, of which Austria would be the soul. During the continuation of such a war the Christian population of the Balkan peninsula would be in a chaotic condition. It would fight the Mussulman inhabitants of the towns, but it would not be able to give Russia any assistance beyond its own territory. In order to occupy the Straits and the entire peninsula, it would be necessary to detach forces greater than those which would be required in case of a war in the West, to defend the shores and land frontier of Russia against a live Turkey. So that in reality the seizure of Constantinople from seaward, while such a seizure was yet possible, would have increased but very little the material probabilities of the final success of Russia. In questions of the character of the last Greek Ques-

tion, a fleet in the Black Sea might have exercised a weighty influence; it might have been used as a strong diplomatic expedient, but it would have been no very important military weapon, in view of the objects that appertain to Russia. It is naturally impossible to estimate, speculatively, the moral effect of such a stupendous event as the entry of the Russian troops into Constantinople, even if it were unexpected; but such an event would in any case be a double-edged weapon.

CHAPTER III.

AUSTRIA—THE CHIEF OPPONENT OF RUSSIA.

It may, I think, be concluded, on the basis of undeniable facts, that the principal obstacle and the chief opponent of Russia in this Eastern Question is neither France nor England, but Austria; the two former are nothing more than her allies in this matter, although they make more noise and place themselves more prominently forward. The Naval Powers alone could not bar the road to the Bosphorus against Russia, even by force of arms; Austria can arrest Russia, without firing a gun, merely by her armed neutrality. Not only to a military man who understands his profession, but to every man who can weigh the circumstances of a case, there is no truth more patent than this, that the question which is generally called the Eastern Question cannot be solved by a local war on the Balkan peninsula, and that Russia cannot even undertake a war in that direction, *whatever may happen and however much her forces may be developed*. So long as the Black Sea fleet existed, Russia could commence operations on the south, in order, however, to finish where it will now be necessary to begin, should it come to a collision, namely, on the western

frontier. Not having foreseen that termination in 1854 and prepared for it, Russia fell necessarily into a vicious circle. Russia has now no choice of a commencement; she can enter Turkey through Austria, but she can in no case leave Austria on one side. It depends upon Austria not only to restrain Russia from an open intervention in the Eastern Question, but it is in her power, also, to hurl the forces of a European coalition against our western frontier. She can, at her convenience, shield Turkey by an armed neutrality, as in 1854, or open a road to the Vistula by revolutionizing Poland, as she threatened to do in 1856. Such a part belongs exclusively to Austria, and her position in Europe is principally founded upon it. In two questions of vital importance to Russia—the Eastern and the Polish—Austria can be both the shield and the weapon of the hostile part of Europe, according as it may serve her interests. It may require but little patience to see how this double part will be played out.

In order to solve a difficult problem, it is first of all necessary to ascertain in what the difficulty consists. In order to discuss with advantage the Eastern Question within the limits usually assigned to it, *i. e.* within the boundaries of Turkey, it is necessary first of all to recognize the chief impediment in the way of Russia, which consists in this, that she cannot get there. To hold out her hand openly to the Christian populations of the Balkan peninsula would be tantamount to giving that hand to be cut off. Let us take as an example the last Greek collision. Both in Russia and

in Europe the idea was current, in private and diplomatic circles, that Russia could not arrest Turkey by force because she had no guns. But, suppose she had had guns? Could she have moved an army beyond the Danube, and have entered for that purpose the independent principality of Roumania, without at the same time stationing 300,000 men on her western frontier (a force which she would not at present possess, after detaching an army for the Danube), *i. e.* without preparing from the first for a great European war? To act otherwise would be to bring about an exact repetition of the events of 1854. Russia would within a few days receive a polite invitation to evacuate the Principalities or to allow herself to be cut off. To ask, as people frequently do ask, whether Russia is ready to support her demands on Turkey, is merely to carry on a drawing-room conversation. It is somewhat difficult to be ready for a war which it is impossible to commence. This strange position is far from being temporary. We can have no European allies in view on the Eastern Question, and while Austria stands she will always be a shield to Turkey.

Austria cannot act otherwise; it would be an act of suicide on her part to consent to a solution of the Eastern Question in a Russian sense, or even in a sense that might not be diametrically opposed to Russian views and feelings. The existence of free Slavonian states side by side with extensive Slavonian provinces in a state of thralldom—provinces with inhabitants that are not only of the same blood but that also form one people, speaking the same tongue

on both sides of the Save, is quite incompatible. On one bank of a rivulet, across which a fowl might wade, would be free Skuptchinas and a happy future; on the other, a gradual disappearance of a national identity which had hitherto existed in the form of an inferior race, without the slightest prospects, and which would not become either German or Magyar. Is such a state of things possible? Austria lost her Italian possessions because she admitted the existence next door of a small independent Italian kingdom. How can it be expected that she will consent to the creation along her southern boundary, of a Slavonian Piedmont, which from its national homogeneity would carry dissolution, not only into one corner of her possessions, but into the very body of the Empire? Was the Duchy of Warsaw voluntarily recognized by Russia in 1807? Austria can only have two issues in view: either the Slaves on the other side of the Save will be reduced by her to the position of the Hungarian Slovaks, or the Slaves on this side, as far as Saxony, will take up the same position as the Servians of the Principality. It is difficult to expect from Austria a just solution of the Eastern Question. The possibility alone of such a revolution in the future was a great danger to German Austria, while she was supported by all the forces of the Germanic Confederation; that possibility has become a mortal danger to Hungarian Austria, especially as far as the eastern part of her dominion is concerned, where she can only depend politically on one-third of the population against two-thirds. In that part of her dominions

she has to fear, not only the Slaves, but the Roumanians as well.

It is said that Joseph II. of Austria enjoined his successors, in case of extremity, to convert the monarchy of the Hapsburgs into a Slavonian kingdom. Many philanthropists advise the Government of Austria to avert this danger by a just behaviour towards the Slavonian subjects of the Empire. But, excepting the Czechs, who are, as it were, jammed in a vice by expanding Germany, the Austrian Government has nowhere the direct command over Slavonian populations; it commands the dominant classes and the races that are not Slavonian, to which those populations are subjected. With few exceptions, the proprietorship of land, the historical rights and traditions, and the provincial organization, are not in the hands of the Slavonians. The educated and intellectual classes among the latter are composed of the rural clergy and schoolmasters. Such was (if we may still use the past tense) the position of the people in the western provinces of Russia, even with this further resemblance that in Poland, as now in Austria, the foreign dominant element rested on a kernel of the nominally dominant people and on towns which were foreign and hostile to the villages. It would be futile to advise the Polish nobility to recognize the justice of the demands of the majority of the nation, and to make, voluntarily, a concession which neither an all-powerful Government nor the crushing force by which it is backed, has yet been able to wrest from them; and it would be quite as futile to give similar advice

to the Austrian Germans and Magyars, who are well aware of the undoubted superiority of their organized strength over the scattered impulses of the races subject to them. The Austrian Government could not re-establish the independence of the Slaves even in the name of a democratical principle, since the discord that reigns amongst them has not only reference to classes but to peoples ; besides, what advantage would it be for the Government to exchange the support which it obtains from the dominant, politically organized races, for the sympathy of elementary forces, especially as, with the exception of Galicia, which hinders rather than assists the other Slaves, the dominant races and provinces in the remaining part of the Empire, are numerically equal to those that remain enthralled.

Nevertheless, the national feeling of the Austrian Slaves may be said to be spreading rather than lessening ; in order to ripen and to take a definite form, that national feeling requires an amount of public latitude and concord which cannot be found where no definite practical object exists or can exist. Internal Slavonic disturbances are neither terrible to Austria as a whole, nor to Hungary as part of the Empire. The Czechs and Croats can only agitate ; the other Slavonian subjects of Austria can only murmur. Austria may be likened to a loaded cannon, which will stand harmless for ages unless a spark touches it. It is natural that precautions should have been taken against the danger of such a spark alighting, and neither Austria nor Hungary can be blamed for it.

The same, although in a ruder form, is repeated

on the southern bank of the Save. There also the danger to the dominant nation consists entirely in the Slavonic race. The phantom of an Eastern Empire has been dissipated before our eyes; the quarrel about bishops has shown clearly how willingly the Bulgarians will receive Greek officials. It is not impossible to re-establish the Greek Empire by force, but it can neither re-establish nor maintain itself. If the question were merely about the Greeks, it would have long ceased to be a question at all. To Greece may belong Epirus, Thessaly, the south-eastern corner of Macedonia, Candia, Cyprus, and the islands of Asia Minor; these are the limits of the Hellenic race. The remaining Greek populations in the Turkish Empire are too mean in numbers and too scattered to think of dominating. Constantinople lies more than a day's voyage by steamer from the nearest Hellenic soil, and could in any case only be a colony in the hands of the Greeks; and a people of which scarcely three millions exist either on the mainland or on the islands could not hold as a colony a distant town, with a million inhabitants principally of an alien race. The brave and clever Greeks could be portioned out without any injury even to Turkey. Europe oppresses them, firstly, because they represent the protruding end of a ball of thread, an end which Europe fears to draw out any farther, in order that the entire ball may not become unravelled and disclose its Slavonian core; secondly, because the Greeks are aliens to Europe on account of their orthodox religion. Who can doubt that the Greeks would long ago have had justice

done them if they were Catholics or Protestants? The murder of a few Syrian Catholics was sufficient to bring a French squadron to the rescue. The complete liberation of the Greek people might be effected apart from the Eastern Question, without touching it substantially. The question is not about the Greeks, with the exception of the peninsula occupied by the Hellenic and Albanian races, and forming as it were an excrescence of the great Balkan peninsula; all the rest in European Turkey, from Dalmatia and the Danube to Constantinople, is Slavonian. Half a century ago there was neither direct contact nor sympathy between the Slaves of Turkey and those of Austria; the liberation of Servia created both. Of course Hungary cannot forget that in 1848 the free Servians came to the aid of their brethren, her subjects. A stream of running water, and the colour of a frontier barrier cannot separate morally the Slavonian mass which extends from the Archipelago to Saxony, since those masses have awakened to national consciousness. Austria can hold her part of the Slavonian mass as long as Turkey holds hers, and *vice versâ*. This position of affairs determines the relations of Austria towards the Eastern Question, apart even from the will of her statesmen. Turco-Slavonian and Austro-Slavonian affairs are wound up in such a tangled skein that it is impossible to unravel the one without touching the other.

Here is a specimen of the relations of Austria, and, after her example, of those of Western Europe towards the natives of the Balkan. The French press disclosed

that in 1863 the following conditions of an alliance between the Cabinets of the Tuileries and Vienna had been discussed. Austria was to cede Venice to Italy, and Galicia to a re-established Poland, in return for Bosnia, the Herzegovina, Servia, and Roumania. Whether free or not free, and not only the Slaves, but all the orthodox populations of the Danube as well, were to be exchanged into slavery in masses of so many souls for every soul liberated in Europe, inclusive also of the poor Russians (Ruthenians) of Galicia. For Austria, and many agree with her in such a view, this is the only possible solution of the Eastern Question: Austria to take whatever she can as far as the Balkans; to give everything that would not suit her to any other European power, as for instance, Albania to Italy, which is already looking out for her share in the Turkish succession; to leave whatever she cannot as yet take in the hands of the Turks; to indemnify Turkey with the Caucasus—with the Georgians male and female—to which the Pachas are agreeable; if driven to extremity (perhaps) to replace Turkish by Greek violence beyond the Balkans, to the ruin of the Greeks and the Bulgarians; but on no account to give independence to a single Slavonian soul. If we continue to regard the Eastern Question from a European point of view, with the hope of settling it by a campaign beyond the Danube, the result would be in all probability very similar to that which has just been sketched out.

It would appear, therefore, that of the historical question, *i. e.* the question of the weakness of Turkey, the name alone remains. While, started by Lord

Chatham, that question has been discussed during a whole century, another question still more important, and which can only be called the Pan-Slavist Question, has grown from under it; and the debatable boundaries, which now include not the Balkan peninsula alone, but the entire country between the Ore mountains and the Archipelago, have grown with it. To Europe, which does not desire the independence of the Slaves, the Eastern Question may continue to exist in its previous form,—as an unfinished question of the dissolution of Turkey; but we, Russians, have no reason to close our eyes against realities. We must see in the famous question that which really exists in it—a Slavonian family question, depicted on the map of Europe in two different colours, but indivisible in reality, and not to be solved except conjointly; for the reciprocal connection of both parts of the question is now an undoubted fact, and one that cannot be affected by any eventualities.

Without doubt, the Slavonian Question in its two divisions—the southern and the northern—is distinguished by strong contrasts. In Austria, the Slave vainly beats against the bars of his cage, but he can still live as a man. In Turkey he cannot live as a man. The hanging of priests, the suffocation of people with their heads thrust into bags of millet—all these barbarous proceedings of a Tartar horde against a Christian people act, of course, differently on Russian nerves than does political oppression in Austria; the question of humanity is sometimes in advance of the impulses that result from an identity of blood and

religion. In consequence of this, the southern Slavonian group makes itself heard more frequently, and demands from diplomacy temporary measures, which are inapplicable to the northern group. The ordinary ways of diplomacy are not applicable to both groups ; nevertheless history has tied both these questions into one knot, has cemented them, and does not admit any partial solution of either. Europe purposely averts her eyes from a dangerous unity, and does not wish to see it, but understands it very well ; we have only to remember what a disturbance the innocent visit of the Slavonian delegates to Moscow created in the European Press. Russia cannot, however, but see it. She stands with her face to the west, and the rising sun does not dazzle her eyes.

As yet I have not departed from the domain of facts. It is not arguments but facts that demonstrate that Russia cannot reach the Danube except through Austria. This position, apparently without issue, was defined with mathematical accuracy in 1854, and continued unchanged until 1866. For ten years Russia was unable to touch the Eastern Question effectively, without involving herself in an Anglo-Franco-Austrian alliance on her western frontier, and without giving her opponents a possibility and a pretext for connecting the Eastern with the Polish Question. The victory of Prussia, some think, has shuffled the cards to the advantage of Russia. In any case, the events of 1866 have altered the international relations of Europe, and cannot but have an influence on the position of the Eastern, *i. e.* of the Pan-Slavonian, Question.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA, AND
THE FOREIGN ALLIANCES OF RUSSIA.

It is impossible to speak of the military and political relations of Russia towards other Powers without taking into consideration the new position of Prussia.* But here we must involuntarily leave the firm ground of realities, for that position has not yet been defined by established facts. National tendencies, to which modern Governments are obliged to submit, have taken the place of international relations based on past events.

We all know the circumstances under which Russia can form an alliance with "*her ally*" Prussia, as we often now hear that country called. Those circumstances are—that inimical Franco-Austrian alliance which is periodically announced by journalists (notwithstanding its improbability), and which, although directed mainly against Prussia, is to affect Russia indirectly. In the face of such a political combination Prussia would certainly make large concessions on the Eastern Question, even in a purely Russian sense.†

* Written before the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

† i. e. as a Pan-Slavist Question —TRANS.

She would pay that price for an alliance against a dangerous foe.

But except in the event of such a combination, it is difficult to imagine any circumstances under which Prussia would offer her alliance to Russia; still less can she be expected to make such an offer in connection with the Eastern Question, unless she is compelled to do so. Even old Prussia was not sympathetically inclined towards that Question from a Russian point of view, as soon as a connection between Austrian and Turkish interests became evident; and it should be borne in mind that in old Prussia, special, not German interests had the precedence over sympathies for race. A large reward might have rendered possible an arrangement with old Prussia on Turco-Slavonian and Austro-Slavonian affairs, which are indissolubly connected; but now Prussia has become Germany. The whole thought of her Government consists in this, that she has taken upon herself to uphold the external interests of Germany, of which she has declared herself the buckler and the sword; and it is only on that condition that Prussia can maintain her pre-eminence. The German interests of Austria are at the same time as dear to Germany as those of Prussia, whether on the Upper Elbe and the Save, or on the Warta and the Lower Vistula.

In this respect the German tendencies can scarcely be called tendencies, for they are considered in Germany as inalienable rights.

In the eyes of every German all that is included within the dominions of the Austrian Empire is the

inheritance of Germany, while anything that can be added to it will be regarded as a German acquisition. Open whatever book you like of Travels in Austria by a non-Austrian German, and you will find that half of it is devoted to reproaching the Austrian Government for not having known how to Germanize, during so many centuries, the Slaves, the Roumans, and even the Magyars,—to suggestions for their more rapid Germanization, and to the expression of a conviction that, in the hands of other more energetic sons of Germany, that Germanization could be speedily effected, and the Danube become an exclusively German river. The giving up not only of the whole, but of any part of the Austrian Slaves would be regarded by any German in the same light as a Russian would regard the cession of the provinces beyond the Dnieper. The question of the Baltic provinces in Russia represents, perhaps, still more correctly the light in which the provinces of Austria are regarded in Germany.

There is no German who will in his heart consent to acknowledge the independence of the Magyars for an indefinite period. Nevertheless every German understands that his countrymen are as yet unable to cope with the Slaves of the Danube without the assistance of the Hungarians, who, on their part also, are well able to understand the necessity of mutual support. The Hungarian Premier boasted but a short time ago that were he in the position of Chancellor of the Empire he would soon quiet the Czechs. In respect to Russia, Hungary is the advance guard of Germany, while the Hohenzollerns in Roumania are

but its outpost. Many politicians, both in Europe and in Russia, are ingenuous enough to express surprise that Austria should tolerate the influence of Prussia on the lower course of the Danube, proving, as it does, in their imagination the perfidious intention of Prussia to outflank her rival. Meanwhile, Austria appears to be perfectly satisfied. There can be no doubt that, as far as she is concerned, it is very immaterial to her whether the influence exercised in that direction be Prussian, Bavarian, or Austrian: it is still literally German. Having placed herself at the head of Germany, Prussia must necessarily secure to the German race the limits which it has marked for itself, together with all its advanced posts. This is an indispensable condition of the existence of the Prussian dynasty.

Circumstances might certainly arise (such, for instance, as an Austro-French alliance) in which Prussia would not only consent to the dismemberment of Austria as an empire, but would also assist in such a work, and set up Hungary in her stead. Prussia could never go against the preponderance of Germany in the Austrian provinces, nor oppose its establishment, except in case she were threatened with too great a danger herself.

But if Prussia cannot admit the independence of the Austrian Slaves, she cannot admit that of the Slaves of Turkey either, for the independence of the latter involves that of the former. The liberation of the southern Slaves of the Danube must be followed by that of the northern Slaves; the Hungarian Roumans are already holding up their heads since their bre-

thren of the Principalities have achieved their semi-independence. How is the deep-thinking German not to understand a thing so plain? If Russia continues to reckon upon the sympathy of Prussia, the result will be similar to that of the last conference on Greek affairs. Old Prussia might not have been the confederate of Austria in the Eastern Question, but new Prussia is compelled to enter into partnership with her. The interests of Austria in the Eastern or South-Slavonian Question are German interests securing the historical preponderance of Germany in the valley of the Danube and on its affluents. Prussia morally guarantees those interests, and in consequence of having given that guarantee stands at the head of Germany.

It is, therefore, strange to find the idea so prevalent in Russia that the alliance with Prussia possesses a character of durability. Old friendships and family relations did not prevent Russia from siding against Prussia in 1851, even without any very great necessity, nor did they prevent Prussia from taking part against Russia in 1854. The latter circumstance is particularly remarkable. The Prussia of the past—the second member of the Germanic Confederation—although but recently humiliated by Austria, considered herself bound to stand up for her rival against Russia. How then can the Prusso-Germany of our days abandon Austria to her fate in a struggle with the foreigner?

In the case of a war with France,* Prussia would

* Written before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War.

naturally pay for the alliance of Russia by large concessions even on the Slave Question; but France would offer a similar price for such an alliance, and it would be easier for her than for Prussia to make concessions, which would be sacrifices only as far as her policy, not her national feeling, was concerned. Except as regards a certain community of interests in the Polish Question—a community which is quite extraneous—all the more substantial interests of Russia and Prussia are much more antagonistic than those* of Russia and France. It is impossible for Russia to reckon upon an ally whom a feeling of self-preservation impels in the greater number of cases to play the part of a rival, and even that of an enemy.

As far as Russia is concerned, the extension of Prussia into Germany has lessened the danger of the quadruple alliance between England, France, Austria, and Italy, which has so constantly threatened the Eastern Question; or rather, it has lessened the danger of the direct action of such an alliance on the western frontiers of Russia, without, however, removing the danger entirely; the possibility of an attack on Russia by sea remains in all its force. But while reducing one danger, the extension of Prussia has created a new one. In the first place, by converting Austria politically into Hungary, the war of 1866 placed the government of that empire in hands far more energetic, ambitious, and greedy of annexation than those which had previously ruled the country; and at the same time, by setting up a wall between

Austria and Europe, the results of that war left her liberty of action only towards the south and east, *i. e.* all the thoughts and ambition of the empire became directed towards the Turco-Slavonian and Roumanian provinces. Secondly, the results of that war have given to Austria the support of the contiguous, concentrated, and kindred forces of Germany, in lieu of the distant support of the Western Powers. If Austro-Hungary continues honestly to follow the new groove in which she has been placed (of which there is but little doubt) Germany will stand up for her, ^{*}as for her own property, in any case that may in future arise.

In both respects, therefore, the war of 1866 rendered worse, not better, the military and political positions of Russia.

It has already been shown that the knot of the Eastern Question lies in Austria, not in Turkey. Russia cannot enter Turkey except through Austria. Under such circumstances (and they are no longer doubtful nor susceptible of any change) everything that strengthens Austria is a new impediment to Russia. At the same time it is evident that the termination of the old feud with Prussia and her alliance with that Power will give Austria much more solidity than would an alliance with unsteady and non-contiguous France. Whether it be in respect to the number of forces, the convenience of concentrating armies, or the durability of the connection (based, as it would be, on popular feeling), the advantages of an alliance with Prussia far outweigh those of an alliance

with France. If the position of Russia in the Eastern Question has heretofore been one of difficulty, owing to the fact that Austria has acted as a shield to Turkey, it has become considerably more difficult since Austria is shielded by Prussia. There are now three tiers of shields piled up against Russia.

In the new position of affairs created by the successes of Prussia, the chief opponent of Russia in the Eastern Question—the question of the independence of the Slave races, even if only those beyond the Save—will not be the west, but the centre of Europe, the German race. Political opposition is now supported by an opposition inspired by national feeling.

But while the unification of Germany has been of immense disadvantage to Russia in general, it has in one respect conferred an advantage by opening a wider field for agreements and perhaps for an alliance. Until 1866 the most moderate agreement on Eastern affairs with France, free as she was in her actions, and accustomed to go hand-in-hand with England, was always either doubtful or fruitless. Russia had thus the chance of only one alliance—with Prussia—but only in the event of Western Europe joining Austria in an attack on the western frontier of Russia. In such a case probably, although it cannot be assumed as a certainty, Prussia would not allow herself to be outflanked. Since, however, the consolidation of Germany, France no longer disposes of her former liberty of action, and is obliged to seek a serious alliance wherever it may be possible. Notwithstanding the assertions of journalists, an alliance between France

and Austria, on the basis of a restoration of the rivalry between the two German Powers, could never have been seriously contemplated. It is evident that the Austrian Government does not dispose of a sufficient degree of independent will for such a decision, hampered as the Government is in its action by the Diet of Vienna as well as by that of Pesth. Neither the Magyars nor the Austrian-Germans would exchange their new future, however different it may be to them both, for the previous state of affairs, for the restoration of which they will certainly not shed their blood.

An agreement with Russia has become much more important to France than it was formerly. The establishment of intimate relations with Russia is impeded by the antagonism of the French public, under the influence of the clerical and liberal parties and the permanence of its sympathies for Poland, but not by the operation of any interests that are all-powerful in questions of policy. I do not intend to discuss the comparative advantages of this or that alliance, for they can only be properly estimated by the Imperial Government on the strength of well-defined events; but it appears to be pretty clear that in view of the rivalry which has arisen between France and Prussia as a result of the war of 1866, Russia has acquired a freedom in the choice of an alliance which she did not previously possess.

I think, however, we should not deceive ourselves as to the importance of any alliance whatever in Europe. The positive historical interests* of Russia are of such a character that no one will voluntarily

stretch out a hand to assist in their realization. The centre of the opposition against Russia, as already shown, is in Austria; it is impossible to get round her. At the same time, unless that centre of opposition be removed, Russia will not only be unable to establish satisfactorily her external relations at any future period soever, but she will also allow to be amassed dangers of the greatest imminence to her internal affairs.

And where can Russia find a true ally against Austria? Austria, or even her successor Hungary, is undoubtedly dearer to Europe even than Turkey. In Turkish affairs, it is only the present that is of any importance; sooner or later, the Turkish succession must inevitably become vacant, and it is only a question as to who shall be the heirs. Meanwhile the whole of Europe repeats in chorus the old adage that if Austria ceased to exist (it will soon be changed to *Hungary*), it would be necessary to create a new Austria, and that the union of the Danubian races under one sceptre is indispensable to Europe, as a barrier against the East.

The East formerly meant: Turkey and Mahomedanism; it now means: Russia, Pan-Slavism, and Orthodoxy. In ordinary times, when not torn by any intestine dissensions, Europe would cordially unite in defence of such a Danubian union. To Western Europe, that union represents the political balance of power; to Central Europe, national greatness; to the clerical party, a bulwark against the orthodox East (which in the eyes of that party is even more important than the temporal power of the Pope); while,

as far as the masses are concerned, that union represents the protection of civilization from a new invasion of Mongols in the form of the recently-discovered Muscovo-Turanian race. While this deeply-rooted feeling exists, any agreement that runs counter to it will be subject to the operation of a secret intention to withdraw from such an agreement at the first convenient opportunity. Concessions will terminate with the last shot fired; and the ally of yesterday will begin to counteract the consequences of such concessions to the same extent as the foe of yesterday. Whatever alliance Russia may form, and however victorious she may be under it, she will only retain that which she has completely secured during the continuance of the war. But in the great question which, as we shall see presently, Russia has before her, there is nothing that can be finished at one stroke; a war can only sow the seed, and peace must ripen the harvest. It is the gathering in of the harvest that both friend and ally will oppose, visibly and secretly.

A European alliance can only give Russia the possibility of acting during a short interval, without fear of being hindered, and of sowing the seeds of a future harvest; but it would be a mere idle dream to depend upon any alliance for the systematic solution even of the most ordinary and legitimate international requirements of Russia.

I may say, *en passant*, that the only ally Russia can possibly have in the world, and who is not inimical to her historical interests, is America; but an alliance with North America, although of immeasurable im-

portance to Russia as a counterpoise to the naval force of the Western Powers, can give her no assistance on land.

Speaking of alliances, it is always necessary to bear in mind the fact that under no circumstances will it ever depend upon Russia to create an alliance; the other Powers are cautious of her, and her initiative in the matter of an alliance would excite the distrust even of those whose interest it may be to side with her. Russia can only join one of the two camps into which Europe is at times divided; but without having the initiative, it is difficult to give a direction to events. Questions of the utmost gravity to Russia may arise exactly at the time when there is no direct cause for division in Europe. In the present order of things—since Prussia, in virtue of her new position, stands in reserve behind Austria, and while, at the same time, the Western Powers continue to regard the Eastern Question with the same strong feelings of enmity, Russia may be subjected to the unanimous veto of Europe at the most critical moment of her existence.

It is evident that Russia should always be ready in a military point of view, in order not to allow the escape of opportunities which may never return.

Indeed, from whatever side we may approach this great question, it still remains one that cannot be solved by any ordinary means. Russia stands alone, without hope of consideration from others, in view of Turkey in a state of dissolution, and which she cannot approach; in view of the Black Sea, which has been

closed to her; in view of the Slavonic provinces of Austria which are being forcibly Germanized and Magyarized; in view of the Russians of Galicia, whose groans are so audible; in view of the Polish Galicians and the Emigration, steadily awaiting a fitting opportunity for the renewal of their sedition, and, if possible also, for the carrying of a European war into the kingdom of Poland and the western provinces of Russia.

It requires no further explanation to show what would be the position of Russia, what sacrifices, and what a hard fight she would be called upon to make under the most unfavourable circumstances, if the principal questions that now agitate Europe should ripen, and, finally, be settled without Russia being taken into consideration, and in a sense unfavourable to her interests. Those questions cannot be circumvented; they will always crop up. The advantage will probably be to those who begin the game earliest, and get the start. It is a question of means and resources. However great may be the national strength of Russia (or rather, however great *might be* that strength), the total which the adversaries of Russia can bring forward is stronger still. Unless there be a division in the enemy's camp, Russia will not be able to remove the obstacles that oppose her progress, nor can she in such a case reckon upon a sincere accord with any European ally soever.

CHAPTER V.

THE SLAVE ALLIES OF RUSSIA.

THE undoubted, but still very abstract, sympathy of the forty millions of Slave and Orthodox populations by which Russia is surrounded is yet but of little practical importance to her. Not only are those populations for the most part unable to dispose of themselves, but even in their sympathy with Russia there is nothing definite; they are content to know that there is in the world a great and independent nation—akin by language and religion—and that is all. It is only the most down-trodden and helpless of those tribes, the Ruthenians, Galicians, and Bulgarians, that would desire the direct aid of Russia. Nevertheless, the Slaves and the Orthodox are near to our hearts. At the same time, the principal force which restrains the natural tendencies of Russia consists in the proportion of two-thirds, of the very same men, who are not only *not* inimical, but who even in a certain degree sympathize with us,—a phenomenon that is at all events strange, particularly at a time when the question of nationalities is everywhere rife. If the chief part of the forces at the disposal of France

consisted of Alsatians, speaking a German dialect, although one almost unintelligible to a Prussian, the fact would certainly not be lost sight of by Prussia. It matters little who owns the body as long as the spirit is with us. To Russia the future depends upon a correct application of the question, What is necessary, in order that all should be with us in spirit?

In the Eastern Question, it is only its border, namely, the Southern border (which is gradually falling off from it of its own accord), that is not Slavonian. The Eastern Question is, therefore, only the Southern half of the Slavonian Question, which either cannot be solved singly, or can be solved only in a sense directly hostile to Russia. Austrian affairs are to such an extent interwoven with those of Turkey, that it is impossible to touch one part of the Question without touching the whole. We can proceed to a solution of the great Slavonian Question in its entirety, but we cannot even approach the Turkish half of it alone. By acting differently, we should be following a spectre that cannot be reached, and we should find ourselves within a vicious circle, as in 1854. Nothing good can be expected in the future, until a recognition of this truth has been firmly implanted in the Russian mind. *Names have a great significance; as regards the masses, they take the place of matured opinions.*

It is only when the Eastern Question shall have been baptised with its proper appellation, expressive of its substance, when it shall in fact be called the "*Slavonian Question*," that we shall be able to believe

that the Question is properly understood in Russia. Even the expression of "South-Slavonian" will not do, for, practically, a South-Slavonian Question has no separate existence. When we shall have given the Question its right name, the Slavonian world will more readily understand that our solicitude concerns all, not ourselves alone.

Under certain circumstances the attainment of the whole of an object may appear easier than the attainment of only one-half of it. In whichever way we may approach the Eastern Question—whether we approach it, or it approaches us—we shall still have on our hands a coalition of which Austria will be the heart, if not the head; we shall have to recede, as in 1854, or fight Austria. But in such a case, what is best: in entering upon a struggle with Austria on the Slavonian Question, to find numerous allies within her borders (having, of course, taken the upper hand in advance), or in undertaking a war on the metaphysical Eastern Question in a European sense, to find her composed only of Austrians? A Danubian alliance, as they call it in Europe, will become impossible only, when the Slavonian tribes shall know positively beforehand, from the settled and undoubted direction of the whole policy of Russia, that we are on their side—as soon as they shall become convinced that Russia raises the Slavonian standard, not for the hour, in consequence of temporary difficulties, but that she holds it firmly and erect as her historical destiny. The national policy of Russia is yet so new that it has been unable to ripen, even in its own consciousness; her kinsmen

abroad do not yet see or believe it. To the majority of them, Russia remains traditionally the Russia of the Holy Alliance, but with some kind of new and not quite intelligible ways about her. The Slaves know that, in 1849, the Galicians, who used to repeat "We are Russians, we are groaning under a foreign yoke, open to us the doors of our own house," received the following answer: "We came here, not to incite subjects against their lawful Sovereign, but in order to compel them to submit to him."

The Slavonians know that Count Medem, the Russian Envoy at Vienna, in replying to an observation made by his predecessor Tatistcheff respecting the sympathy of the Slaves with Russia, said, "I only know Austrians in Austria;" and that the same Count Medem several times turned Ban Jellachich out of the house of the legation, when he came to him as the representative of Russia, in 1848, for advice.

The Slaves, who are struggling in the hateful grasp of Germany at home, consider German influence all-powerful in Russia, and do not believe in the sincerity of Russian diplomatic agents with German names. The recent marks of our sympathy with them have been of a very feeble character. Of the 70,000 roubles,* which is the estimate of only the most indispensable aid for college exhibitions, &c., with a view to the support of the Slavonian development, not one-third of the amount is collected during the year, while the Slavonian guests who come to St. Petersburg see

* About 9000*l*.

that a private individual will think nothing of spending 70,000 roubles on his whims. The Slaves know, from the Russian Press, the extent to which our present Conservatives are in accord with our former Nihilists in disregarding their fate; they accept the expressions of sympathy which reach them from time to time as the manifestations of a small and practically uninfluent group of men, and they could not judge otherwise from the result. The Slavonian leaders have now, of course, become convinced that the heart of Russia has been stirred in favour of her kindred; but, in addition to the fact that the opinion of a few individuals, although of high-standing, does not penetrate into the masses at once, those leaders know also the extent to which public opinion in Russia is vacillating; acts are not in keeping with words, nor is the morrow in unison with to-day's beginnings. They know that Russia is not America, and that the feelings of Russians do not go beyond them, and there is no work to be seen. It is even astonishing that the Slaves should maintain their present inclinations towards Russia and their faith in her. These feelings on their part prove only one thing—a recognition of the impossibility of escaping by their own efforts from the vice in which they are held and which compels them to grasp at such a straw as their hope in Russia has hitherto been. But we must not mix up two separate things: the want of strength to stand upon legs that are bound together does not prevent the exhibition of enormous power as soon as those legs are unfastened.

Everything now depends upon ourselves, using the word "ourselves" in the sense of the State and the public taken collectively. The Slavonian populations of Austria and Turkey sympathize with us only partly, and that in a literary kind of way rather than in any other, even where they dispose of a certain liberty of action, as in Servia. And it cannot be otherwise. Did the Italian populations sympathize more strongly with Piedmont in 1848? The western Slaves are not sufficiently near to us, historically, in order that they should cherish, disinterestedly, towards Russia the feelings with which the Russian Galicians are animated; they are, nevertheless, sufficiently near by blood in order to be able to distinguish the hand of a brother from that of a stranger, when that brotherly hand is extended towards them,—or as soon as they see in the meanwhile, at all events, a firm resolve on the part of that brother to extend it. They are still looking around the horizon and waiting for some bright spot in the sky. We can well understand it. Some of our western kinsfolk, half free, like the Servians, are proud and would do everything for themselves. In this respect, we might point out to them the experience of the past, we might point to the Cabinets of Vienna and Pesth in the first line and to those of Prussia, England, and France in the second, in order to undeceive them finally, and to take from them every hope of finding an issue by their own efforts. Of the subjects of Austria we need not speak; like men buried alive, they will beat against the lids of their coffins until they are suffocated, or until a friendly

hand comes and removes the lid. After each effort and the disenchantment by which it is succeeded, the Slaves will again look to Russia. But in order to be able to reckon upon the sincere and active sympathy of both the Slavonian groups—on a sympathy directed towards a practical object, it is necessary that Russia should give them a material guarantee of her readiness to pass from words to action, to the extent of her power and ability. To those who are interested in the matter it is clear that the power, the ability, and the time, will not depend upon ourselves; but it is important they should be convinced of the sincerity of our desire to assist them. It is likewise clear to all, that an empire, of which the population will in all probability attain a total of 100 millions by the end of the present century, will not be content with mere useless desires for too great a length of time.

That conviction can be given to the Slaves, not by diplomatic despatches, but by acts, in which there is a share for all: for the authorities, for private means, and for the good-will of classes of society and of corporations. It is necessary to inspire the Slaves with a conviction that Russia does not take her eyes off them, that their leaders are supported, that every Slave is at home in Russia. I only state the heads of what has long been said by others. It is necessary to give the means, not abundant means, but such as shall be sufficient to support the mental Slavonian movement, at all events with a view to forming nursery beds wherever local means may be absent. It is necessary to encourage the Slavonian leaders

of celebrity by marks of high attention. It is necessary that each champion of the Slavonian cause, persecuted for his love of his own nationality, should not remain helpless at home, but that he should, in extremity, find a refuge in Russia and be guaranteed against want. The learned corporations of Russia are best able to afford assistance in this respect, since the Slavonian leaders abroad belong almost entirely to the learned class. It is necessary that, whenever Russia has need of men of learning, they should be drawn principally from Slavonian countries, where there are so many of them; and that special relations should be established for such an object. It is necessary to disseminate the literature of Russia among the western Slaves by making it materially available to them: it is only in that literature that they will find a common national bond both between themselves and with us. It is necessary, at the same time, to make Russia acquainted with the Slavonian world, to establish Slavonian chairs of history, statistics, &c., in our universities and upper schools, on an equality with Russian chairs. It is necessary that it should be recognized in Russia that the Slavonian Catholic clergy, the chief leaders and guardians of national feeling, are full of love for Russia, that they consist, for the most part, of ardent Russian patriots; and that we should replace by as many of them as can be found willing (first of all in the army) the present Roman Catholic clergy,* both upper and lower, who detest the Russian name. It is necessary, in my opinion, to

* The author implies priests, &c., of Polish origin.

open the service of Russia, and particularly the military service, to Slaves of foreign origin, placing them on an equality with the subjects of Russia, and admitting them with the rank they previously held, without granting a similar privilege to other aliens ; such admission into the service will be useful to them and to ourselves, both in the present and in the future. These measures should be made a general rule, not a demonstration only in a certain eventuality ; it is necessary to create a constant moral contact between Russia and her brethren abroad. Such of the measures above specified as may not be dependent on official authority, require, nevertheless, that an impulse should be given to them from above, for without that, nothing can as yet make any progress in Russia ; after that, however, it will be the duty of the Russian public to appropriate and extend those measures. It is not sufficient to inspire those feelings ; they must be brought into fashion, and then converted into a question of honour. If, after that, those duties should not meet with general recognition, of course it will mean that no faith can be placed in Russia.

In speaking of the Slaves—I mean the whole group of nations connected with Russia by historical destiny, by blood, and by religion—we cannot pass over the Greeks and Roumans in this great question ; the latter have more particularly grown into the compact Slave body, and must of necessity share its fate. Both have the same enemies, and both are equally unable to attain their legitimate object by their own means. The Greeks understand very well, that the only people

that sincerely desires their liberation, and is ready to shed its blood for them, is the Russian people, and none other. A divergence in our views respecting the Eastern Empire,—that senseless chimera of which Russia cannot of course permit the realization, and which is only the fruit of the archæological fancies of the Greek learned party,—will not alienate the national masses from us, for they only desire actualities, *viz.* liberty, and national development. No one doubts that Russia, having once come forward, will carry the Greeks with her. A doubt exists with respect to the Roumans: their leaders are bewildered by a stubborn intrigue from without. But no intrigue can long stand against what is evident; and in this case the truth is fully laid bare. The only nation which has any reasonable cause to desire the independence of the Roumans,—the only nation which has created and supported that independence,—is the Russian nation. Not only is the Rouman race unable, by its own efforts, to gather together its scattered branches, which, like the Slaves, are trampled under foot by the foreigner; but it cannot even maintain its position of a free nation, except with the aid of Russia. The negotiations of 1863 between Austria and France, which magnanimously disposed of the fate of Roumania, and much else which has been said and written in Europe about the Roumans, must at last have opened their eyes. The fate of all the populations on the Danube is oscillating on the point of a needle: they will either become free in an alliance with Russia, or they will become, at first, provinces, then lower races, “Slovaks,” of Hungarian

Austria. The considerations which do not permit Hungary or Austria, and Germany beyond them, to agree to the free existence of the Turkish Slaves, extend in the measure to the Roumans. The two millions of Roumans subject to Hungary, without speaking of the strong tendency of the German race and its Hungarian advance guard towards an occupation of the entire course of the Danube, would appear to constitute a sufficient threat to the defenceless Danubian Principalities. In case of a new struggle on the Eastern Question, or rather on the new Slavonian Question, which has taken the place of the former, the existence of the Roumans, not only as a people, but as men, as citizens, will depend exclusively on the victory of Russia. The Hohenzollern Prince does not guarantee the future of the Roumans, but is an omen of bad augury to them. When people have to choose between such extremes, reliance may be placed on their own feelings of self-preservation, but we should not forget, as far as possible, to open the eyes of all and each unweariedly. The Greeks must be with us or they will long continue to see one half of their people enslaved; the Roumans must be with us or perish. Neither the Greeks nor the Roumans would desire the latter result.

Russia is necessary to the Greeks and Roumans; they are not so necessary as dear to us; and even the Roumans must be dear to us, as orthodox co-religionists, notwithstanding their haughtiness. I do not wish to discuss a religious subject, but I must make reference to one peculiarity. Orthodoxy is not

scattered over the face of the earth, like Catholicism ; it illuminates a compact mass of people, who live side by side, and who have been closely connected with each other from their first appearance in history, and who have before them almost the same religious, moral, and probably also civil, future. In this respect, orthodoxy is stamped with a peculiar, and we may say social, character. Unchanged in its foundations, it recollects the unity of faith, enlightenment, and civil organization which brightened the first day of its triumph,—a tradition which has long been lost in Catholicism. We may convince ourselves by personal experience that to each priest, even to each layman, brought up in the literature of the Church, not only in Roumania, but even in Syria and Egypt, the Russian Tsar is the only orthodox and lawful Tsar, the direct successor of Constantine the Great ; the rest are mere rulers. In Russia now lies the centre of orthodox society, not, of course, of the orthodox faith, but of men confessing that faith : the knot of a close secular union between the orthodox people of the world is to be found in Russia. We, Russians, should not forget that.

Our historical strength lies in the immense sympathetic population that borders the south-west confines of Russia. Our weakness consists in this, that it is only yesterday that we recognized our relationship with tens of millions of a bordering population, and that we have not only omitted to obtain a moral influence over them, but that we have scarcely begun to understand the importance of the crisis in Russian

history which is before us, and which will probably be the last. It is not, however, very difficult to correct the involuntary error of the first three quarters of the present century. In this age of rapid progress, not only are events consummated with extraordinary rapidity, but even the views and feelings of men are subject to equally rapid changes, as soon as reasonable foundations shall have been laid for them; and neither the changes in events nor those in ideas can be measured by the old scale. Even in international policy it is principally a question of firm public conviction, provided the necessary forces are to some extent commensurate; and in our case those forces are evidently commensurate. It is only necessary that a reasonable incitement to an unanimous effort should become evident in a similar degree.

The forces of the population beyond our borders are immense, but they are as yet disjointed. There is no doubt whatever that the Slaves and the orthodox races of different blood by which they are neighboured, and whose fate is bound up with theirs, would at once turn against the present order of things in Turkey and Austria, if they could agree among themselves, and if they undertook the work unanimously, without fear of the rest of Europe. But such an unanimity, growing of itself, is as impossible and as little to be thought of as is the regular motion of the planets without the sun as a centre. Moreover, in this silent struggle, no one member of the great family disposes of a sufficiently evident preponderance of power and development in order to become the recognized leader

of the rest; but each tribe wrestles separately with the circumstances by which it is being crushed: no one tribe can extend a hand to the other, because, firstly, it cannot acquire by its own efforts sufficient liberty of action for the purpose; and, secondly, the direct objects,—the objects of the day,—are in each case different. The populations that are sympathetic towards us are within a vicious circle, without the possibility of attaining unanimity, because they have not sufficient independence; on the other hand, they cannot attain that independence without previous unanimity. Even the independent nations of the Balkan peninsula,—the Servians, Roumanians, Greeks, and Herzegovenians,—are too much divided and crushed by Europe to think seriously of an alliance without unification from outside; the immense Slavonian and orthodox mass is powerless; but collected round a common support, it becomes invincible. Beginning with the northern group, the greater half of the Austrian army is composed of Slaves. On a general call to arms, the Czechs, on both sides of the mountains, can supply 120,000 first-rate soldiers; the Russian Galicians, 60,000; the Slovaks (mixed, however, with other populations in the Hungarian ranks), 30,000; the Slovenians of Illyria and Styria likewise 30,000 men; over and above this, the entire Servian population on the southern frontier of Austria forms a great military camp of the celebrated “red mantles;” the Dalmatians, who are the best seamen in the Mediterranean, man the entire fleet; the Hungarian Roumans, who are in the same position as the Slaves, supply

80,000 men. Of Germans and Măgyars, who constitute the entire political support of Austria, not more than 280,000 will be found in her ranks, including even the Poles. Of course the Slavonian and other regiments, composed of alien races, constitute as yet the power of Austria, and a power that can be relied on as long as the black and yellow standard floats over them; but those regiments would be still more faithful to their national standard, should it be raised.

Further within the confines of Turkey, from Dalmatia to Roumania, dwells the other half of the Servian race—a nation of warriors by nature—which has not hesitated to rise against all the forces of the Turkish Empire, and to defend its independence without foreign aid:—on the shores of the Adriatic are the Herzegovenians, a branch of the Servian race, who for centuries fought against the dominion of the Solimans; on the south are the Greeks, the only people in the world who are ready to die for the national cause, without hope of success; between the Servians and Greeks are 5,000,000 of Bulgars, not warriors as yet, but capable of becoming warriors, and like all Slaves, capable, as we see, of shaking off their yoke any day. Lastly, in the rear of the others, are 4,000,000 orthodox Roumans; their enslaved brethren cry to them, Europe traffics in them in her political arrangements: it will be time for them also to think of the morrow. Our natural allies at present supply almost half a million of soldiers, in order to fasten more securely the hateful yoke which is over them; they will supply, if taken altogether, 700,000

men and a similar force of local militia for the defence of their independence, whenever their hands are untied. Even before that time many of them will range themselves on our side without hesitation, and all will be strongly stirred as soon as the possibility of liberation, not in words, but in deeds, shall flash across them. But of course it is not manifestoes issued on the eve of war that will secure the confidence of our kindred by blood and by religion, for we may remember the effects of the manifestoes of 1854; but it is by a brotherly and active sympathy proved by every-day experience, and by a community of mental and moral life previous to the breaking out of war.

A cause so great cannot be suddenly achieved; even the liberation of Italy, comparatively insignificant in its dimensions, is not yet completed.* It will require several periods of repose before the modern "Austro-Danubian" and "Tartaro-Balkan" Confederations (using the language of Europe) shall be converted from hostile to friendly Confederations as far as Russia is concerned. As yet we are not in direct contact with the Slavonian world, not only morally speaking, but even geographically; we are separated from it on the west by Galicia, Russian and Polish, and on the south by the strip of land ceded to Roumania in 1856.

Russian Galicia presents an insuperable obstacle to our *rapprochement* to the Slaves; it destroys the confidence of the rest towards us at its very conception. Ask any foreign Slave you like about this, and he will say, "What hope can cousins have in Russia,

* Written before the fall of Rome.

when her own brothers, groaning on the Russian borders, can receive no help?" It is indeed Russian Galicia that, more than anything else, inspires Slaves with an idea that our country is at heart foreign to them, that Russian sympathy with the Slaves is nothing more than the expression of the opinion of a small literary circle. You will in vain endeavour to prove to the Slaves that in politics it is a question not of desire but of possibility and favourable circumstance. They insist that the unfortunate Russians of Galicia might have been freed without any extraordinary efforts in 1849, afterwards in 1859, and later still, in 1866. With the western Slaves we may be able to speak of their affairs with some result, only when the plan of Red Russia now six hundred years old shall be realized. We shall at the same moment find ourselves in direct contact with the Slavonian world.

The view of Ismail, torn from Russia, inspires the Turkish Slaves with the same feelings. They have heard the Ismailians say, "The first year we laughed at the Moldavian officers, and waited only for the coming spring; the spring came, and we deferred our hopes to the third year, then to the fourth; now we no longer count the years, and the Moldavian officers laugh at us." People are apt to reckon on the aid only of those who, in their eyes, know how to help themselves.

Nevertheless, who can doubt the inexhaustible vitality and the great destiny of the Russian people, in view of this example of Red Russia? Germans become excellent Frenchmen within two centuries, as

in Alsace; Frenchmen excellent Englishmen, as in New Orleans; Poles zealous Prussians, as in Silesia. But here are two small bits of territory torn from Russia, one yesterday, the other six centuries ago,—and it is impossible to say in which of these remnants Russian feeling is strongest, and which of them awaits with the greatest impatience its adhesion to the kindred stem. The first step which modern Russia has to take if she follows the path of her historical destiny, is to liberate Cis-Carpathian Russia and Ismaïl. In the meanwhile it is possible and necessary to assist the Slaves as men, and to come into closer connection with them; but it is of no use to speak of Pan-Slavism and still less of an Eastern Question which does not exist separately, which is inaccessible to us, and which is therefore as yet a matter of fantasy.

With the exception of Red Russia, Polish Galicia still remains a watch-post of the enemy on this side of the Carpathians; that is, we may say the enemy stands within the “natural” confines of Russia, awaiting favourable opportunities. In this angle is concentrated the chief focus of the *aggressive* forces against Russia, just as at the opposite angle, at the south-eastern bend of the Carpathian Mountains, lies the knot of the *defensive* forces of the enemy, barring the road to the Balkan peninsula. Western Galicia in the hands of Austria constitutes an hourly danger in the Polish Question, and a danger of a European war for Poland.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE POLISH AND
EASTERN QUESTIONS.

WHILE the Pan-Slavonian cause remains undecided, the Polish Question is inseparable from the Eastern Question. It is a sharp weapon in the hands of a foe, which may be used against Russia as soon as she makes the slightest move in the direction, for instance, of the Eastern Question. The future of Poland is, moreover, of importance *per se* to two of the great Powers—France and Austria;—to France, apart from national feeling, because an independent Poland would divide Russia from Germany, and would constitute a French auxiliary force in the rear of Prussia; to Austria, because sedition in Poland is the only arm that Power possesses against Russia, which, on the other hand, has an arsenal full of a variety of arms which can be used against her. But the difference between France and Austria is this, that as far as the former is concerned, the Polish Question is one purely of policy, which can only be indirectly handled, owing to the distance that separates Poland from France, and a question, therefore, which France would will-

ingly get rid of for a good price ; whereas to Austria the Polish Question is one of vital interest.

It is clear that the day on which a heartfelt peace shall be concluded between the Poles and Russians will be the last day of the "Danubian Union." The following dilemma is present to the mind of every Austrian statesman and every Hungarian patriot : it is either Austria that will seize upon the Polish Question, and defend herself with it against her formidable neighbour, or it is Russia that will obtain possession of it, and succeed in making Poland, not a wall, but a bridge, between the two Slavonian groups—the Eastern and the Western.

Austria can scarcely be apprehensive of any serious opposition on the part of Prussia in respect to the Polish Question. That Power has rendered so secure her dominion in the Polish provinces which she holds that even an independent Poland would subject her tenure to no risk ; in a certain time those provinces will be as Prussian as Silesia or Pomerania. At the same time, it is the moral duty of Prussia to protect all the interests of the German Fatherland and its annexations. As soon as it becomes evident that the re-establishment of Poland is necessary for the protection of Austria, *i.e.* for the preponderance of Germany on the Danube, Prussia will be forced to co-operate in the liberation of Poland. Nor will she shrink from such a duty, for an independent Poland would be of great advantage to her. The restoration of Poland by German hands would be tantamount to giving that country up to be devoured by Prussians—it would

give a new impetus to that "*Drang nach Osten*," which is at present arrested by the Russian boundary.

It is clear that in the Polish, as well as in the Eastern Question, the centre of opposition to Russia lies exclusively in Austria. The other evil-wishers of Russia are in both questions merely her allies, more or less staunch, but without exception sincere, as long as they are not carried away by some great conflicting interest.

In the event of danger, Austria holds, in Western Galicia, so to say, Polish sedition in the form of an extract. She has only to pour some hot water upon it, and the remedy is ready at hand. In case of a war with Russia, Austria will take care to make a Polish insurrection as wide-spread as possible, or at all events as wide as in 1863, in order to deflect as great a number of Russian troops as possible from the field on which the fate of the war will be decided. The success of such a plan would be very probable in the present state of the military organization of Russia, without reserves. Without wishing to go into purely military questions, it is impossible not to notice the following facts here. We may well ask, What would be the force left at the disposal of Russia out of the forty-seven divisions of infantry (*i. e.* of the 500,000 regular troops of all arms which at present constitute *the whole of the fighting force* of Russia) against 300,000 Austrians, when out of those forty-seven divisions troops shall have been marched off to defend the shores of the Baltic and Black Seas, to strengthen

the army of the Caucasus, to form an army on the Pruth, and to occupy the kingdom of Poland and the western (old Polish) provinces, as during the time of the last insurrection?*

The borders of Poland are now much more dangerous in the hands of an external foe than they were in 1812, when the Poles passively awaited the defeat of the *Grande Armée*. The intelligent classes have now found out a means of operating against Russia. Each company of Galician Poles that makes a dash over the border into Russia will be immediately converted into a regiment well armed on Austrian account. Bands armed with rifles and strong in numbers would not, of course, be equal to good troops, but they would not in the least resemble the bands of 1863, and Russia will be compelled to scatter throughout the Polish provinces a still greater number of active forces than during the last insurrection.

No one can imagine that the Polish Question is in reality settled. All its component parts are quite as alive now as formerly. As yet the state of affairs has been improved only in one respect,—the people have been removed from the direct influence of the upper classes of society inclined to revolution. That measure is certainly a considerable obstacle to any *indigenous* rising, but it offers no impediment to a rebellion sus-

* In the event of a war with Russia, Austria has no occasion to divide her forces for the defence of any other boundary, for she will be backed by a sympathetic Europe. Can it be expected that Prussia will assist in wresting from Austria the inheritance of Germany on the Danube? Would Italy throw herself into the struggle, in order that she may be repaid, as Greece was repaid in 1854, by the landing of Francis II. at Naples with a suitable force?

tained from without. A province that remains loyal when occupied by an enemy is a burden to him, because the necessity of keeping it in submission divides his forces. But the western provinces of Russia, in their present condition—and not only the kingdom of Poland, but even the province of Volhynia as well, where the Catholics number only ten per cent. of the population—will certainly become thoroughly Polish and hostile to Russia on the first appearance of a foreign foe. The “intelligent classes,” little scrupulous in the means they employ, would immediately seize the power they formerly possessed, and compel the local population, against their will, to toil for the foe of Russia with a zeal equal to that which a trueborn Pole would employ. The numerical preponderance of the Russian race would not impair the quality or weaken the numbers of the armed forces which the province of Volhynia would add to the ranks of the enemy; ten per cent. of the population, hostile to Russia, will easily supply a full contingent for the entire province, provided the maintenance of the families of those who go to the war be laid on the remaining masses. It is not necessary to speak of the provinces in which the majority of the population is under the influence of the Catholic priesthood, and it appears equally futile to repeat the well-known truth that until the majority of the educated classes and of the landed proprietors in the western provinces become Russian (an end towards which but little advance has been made), that part of the Empire will be subjected to all the eventualities of war in the same degree as the kingdom of

Poland. This position of affairs is well known at Vienna, Pesth, and Cracow.

Of course Austria will not enter upon a war except under particularly favourable circumstances. She holds the Polish Question as a kind of lightning conductor, in case of the Eastern Question being raised. The latter, on the other hand, is a direct incentive to a European coalition against Russia. By pressing it, in the sense in which it is generally understood, Russia would create the circumstances which would be favourable to it.

CHAPTER VII.

POLAND MUST BE ADMITTED INTO THE SLAVE
FAMILY

THE Polish Question can only remain a weapon in the hands of Austria until the western region of the Empire, or at all events its six purely Russian provinces, become thoroughly Russian; and this object can easily be attained.* The question will then present itself in a different light, both to Russia and her neighbours. The absurdity of the dream of the restoration of old Poland, which was not a nation, but a casual historical Federation established by force, and quite identical with the proposed "Austro-Danubian" and "Tartaro-Balkan" Federations of the present day, will be patent to all, even to the Poles

* The manner in which the Russification of those provinces can be effected has now become very clear.—it will require a few tens of millions of roubles, pertinacity without violence, sincerity in execution, and three or four years of time. For every ten million roubles not invested in time in the Russification of the country beyond the Dnieper, it will be necessary to spend one hundred millions extra during the first war in which we may be engaged, and in which we shall continue to remain in a highly dangerous position, notwithstanding such an expenditure. Sacrifices for the western provinces constitute a war, not a peace expenditure, and they should therefore not be laid to the account of the current budget, nor made commensurate with its expansibility.

themselves, equally with the dream of the restoration of the empire of Charles V. Until the year 1863, the Poles could not have been blamed for such a dream; they had not the means of convincing themselves of its futility. How were they not to dream of the Poland of 1772, when they saw that a Russian could not obtain an appointment at Jitomir, simply because he was a Russian! The Poles who have emigrated still retain their ideas; but the Poles of Russia, who have not entirely lost their heads, begin to understand the actual state of affairs. One more bold and sensible step, and Russia will be able to take the Polish Question out of the hands of Austria and place it in her own, converting it into a private Slavonian Question.

As I do not think I can be suspected of a want of patriotism, I consider that I am right in expressing my opinion on the question of the boundaries of Poland, so far as it concerns the general position of affairs.

Contemporary history has rendered sufficiently clear the substance of the quarrel between Russia and Poland, that has lasted for four centuries. Poland has acted in that quarrel not as the chief party interested, but in the name of Lithuania, *i.e.* in that of the western half of Russia, to the rights and pretensions of which she accidentally succeeded. The principal pretension was, nevertheless, the unity of Russia under the sceptre of a Western or Eastern Dynasty. The dispute was settled at the close of the eighteenth century, and everything that had anciently belonged to

Russia was then restored to her. The fusion of the two halves would now have been complete if the first two successors of Catherine had undeviatingly followed in her footsteps; the causes that render the fusion difficult have been created, solely by the policy of the Russian Government between 1796 and 1830. In any case, the difficulty is purely artificial, and reminds us, not of the long-continued quarrel between England and Ireland, but of the opposition of the higher classes of Naples, Hanover, or Frankfort, although in a more trenchant form. While the opposition lasts, it constitutes an actual danger in case of war; but measures of Government, similar to those which once gave that opposition power, may now as easily take that power away.

In this respect we have not to deal with an historical question, for history has already pronounced her last word; but with an administrative, financial, and police question, which is not so important as to tie the hands of a natural policy on our part. But beyond the Russian border lies a border which is purely Polish, which we acquired accidentally, and which is a source of constant disturbance in our western provinces; and here the matter assumes another aspect, for we stand on foreign soil, and see not an artificial, but a real disregard of Russian authority. The wisest and the most equitable measures introduced on that borderland, such as the allotment of land to the peasantry, can only be politically useful for a time, or during the life of the generation which benefited by them. Within a few years there will be a million of citizens

n the kingdom of Poland,* instead of two hundred thousand ; such, probably, will be the final result of the allotment of land to the peasantry.

Being now convinced of the impossibility of making any concessions whatever, the Russian Government is of necessity compelled to extend the measures already adopted in the western provinces, to the kingdom of Poland ; but nature will not be violated, and identical measures do not lead to identical results in the western provinces and in the kingdom of Poland. The former can and should be thoroughly Russified, and within the shortest possible period ; but for the Russification of the kingdom of Poland, in the present social condition of Russia, there is scarcely any hope ; we can only put a Russian sign-board over it. Without speaking of the great intensity of the Polish national feeling, side by side with the kingdom of Poland lies Galicia, an inexhaustible source of Polish feeling and Polish visions, and from whence they cannot be prevented from inundating the provinces that belong to Russia. Even the conquest of Cracovian Galicia would not improve the situation in the present state of things ; it would only double the numbers of those by whom we are opposed. Nevertheless, the measures which are adopted with a view to Russifying the kingdom of Poland, although of little promise, are of this temporary benefit, that they constitute the most complete negation of the autonomy of the kingdom. It is impossible as yet, either to make concessions to the Poles,

* The author, as is customary now with Russian writers, calls the kingdom of Poland "the provinces on the Vistula."—TRANS.

or to cherish a well-founded hope of overcoming them. This unsatisfactory state of things is probably only a passing crisis in Russian history, but one which will last until Russia, after having in some places outgrown the tribal limits of her own Russian people, shall become in reality the head of the Slave world.

A firm elevation of the Slavonian banner would place the Polish Question on another footing, and give it a legitimate issue. After the Russification of the western provinces, and the proclamation of the Slavonian idea, the kingdom of Poland will not constitute a Russian internal question. The Polish nation will have to choose between the position of a younger brother of the Russian people and that of a German province. Even now the Poles are only the leavings of the German feast, at which their kindred, and portions of their own body, from the Save to the Vistula, were devoured. Can a narrow strip of land, hemmed in between Russia and Germany, maintain itself in the position of a State, disposing of a sovereign liberty of action,—a liberty that now only belongs to great Powers? Whatever the extent to which we may consider the Poles to be dreamers, it is impossible and contrary to logic, that many of them, and especially the most clever of them, should not see the inevitable necessity of a choice between tribal independence and ruin. It is unnecessary to speak of the Polish emigrants;—they have become a nation of wandering adventurers, for whom sedition on the Vistula, or anywhere else, is only a pretext; but the Poles with fixed habitations, even the most fanatical of them, will

understand their position as soon as they see three-fifths of the estates in the provinces of Minsk and Volhynia in Russian hands, and particularly when they find themselves not on the borders, but in the centre of a country which sympathetically accepts the priority of Russia in a general Confederation. As a man who naturally attaches much value to his nationality, the Pole is in a position from which he cannot escape. He may be prevented from breaking out into revolt, but the hourly idea of revolt cannot be removed from him. His illusions respecting Napoleon having been dispelled, he now rests his hopes on the Diet of Lemberg, on Baron Beust, or on Hungary; while a man lives, he must hope in something. He will cease to rave about the destruction of Russia, as soon as the possibility of establishing a realizable Poland, without becoming a Russian traitor, shall have flashed upon him.

The existence of a Russian Party among the Poles has hitherto been an impossibility, for such a party could have had no definite object in view. The Poles have considered it more convenient and desirable to restore ancient Poland at the expense of Russia, than to establish a Polish nationality within its narrow limits with our aid. But when, on the one hand, the Poles shall have lost all hope of being able to convince the Russian inhabitants of the provinces of Grodno and Minsk, when once on their legs, that they have something in common with them; and when, on the other hand, a hope shall have arisen of preserving true Poland, ten men, earnestly united,

will be able to lay the foundation of a dominant party. Many absurd dreamers will of course be left, but strength lies everywhere in advanced ideas, not in the multitude that lags behind.

The creation of such a party implies the taking of the Polish Question out of the hands of Austria and placing it in those of Russia; it implies also the laying of our principal danger upon the back of our foe.

What then should be done with that object? I think, nothing very extraordinary: we have only to continue the Russification of the western provinces with a determination unmixed with violence, and without sparing any sacrifices; we must consider the Poles as a Slavonian people, who have, in the eyes of Russia, the same right to existence and to Russian aid in the future, for the reuniting of its sundered but still living members, just like any other Slavonian people; and having placed such an object before them, we should discriminate between those who are sincere and insincere in their desire to attain it, for without such a discrimination it is impossible to govern even one's own people. This task cannot be accomplished by Russia so long as she does not recognize her historical destiny and the real import of the obstacles before her; but it will probably not be very difficult when all these facts shall have obtained recognition in Russia. The Poles do not respond to the Czech call to Austrian Pan-Slavism, in order that they should not lose the support of a Government in which their entire hopes are as yet centred. The voice of Russia

is another matter. The laws of logic and probabilities will have been turned upside down if a call from the Russian Government, inviting the Poles to occupy their legitimate position in the Slave family be not soon responded to by a strong party.

It is impossible to raise the Slavonian banner without recognizing the legitimate position of the Poles in the Slavonian family. Four millions of Russian Poles, and two millions of Austrian Poles, daily incited to hatred of Russia, would form a wall between us and Western Slavonia. On the other hand, the perpetuation of the present state of things in Poland, elevated into a principle, will frighten the Slave world and destroy all confidence in Russia at its very root. The Slaves, who to this day fear the phantom of an insatiable Russian ambition would consider our brotherly-call as a stratagem. An insurrection of the Poles, although possible against Russia, would become impossible against a Federation that shall voluntarily recognize the priority of Russia—a Federation that shall have surrounded their country on all sides. To me these things are as clear as that twice two make four. I do not know whether they are equally clear to others.

The recognition of the right of the Polish race to form part of the Slavonian family, would not lead to anything similar to the political system of the Marquess Wielopolski, provided effective measures be adopted for the Russification of the western provinces. It would, indeed, be diametrically opposed to that system, the ultimate object of which was the

concentration of the Polish power, for the purpose of employing it in the East, in the resuscitation of the ancient, violently created Polish dominion. The recognition of the Slavonian right of the Poles to direct their power towards the West, to the restoration of a real and legitimate Poland, converts them into an advanced guard of the Slavonian movement, and transfers the Polish Question from the hands of Austria into those of Russia.

If Russia should, sooner or later, restore the Slave world, she will have succeeded in that work in virtue of having been called to it by Providence, and in consequence of having been entrusted with the fulfilment of destinies marked out for humanity. But it is impossible to serve Providence and to deny justice at the same time, particularly to a member of our own family.

Except in respect to the irritation to which the events of many centuries have given rise between Poles and Russians, the Polish Question, being one of race, in no way differs from other local Slavonian Questions. ..

CHAPTER VIII.

THE POLICY AND FUTURE OF THE SLAVE RACES.

ALL the Slave races are in the same position, approximately, as the Poles. They all have to choose between two issues: either to close in around Russia in order to preserve their national individuality, or to sacrifice their individuality entirely. The vast debatable zone between the confines of the purely Russian and the purely German races, already, to a great extent, politically seized by the Germanic race, will be Germanized to the last man; there can be no doubt of that, if each of the mosaic squares of which that zone is composed be left to its own resources. As soon as the unification of Germany shall have been completed, there will be no hope left for the Slaves on either bank of the Save. Prussia does not act in the same manner as Austria. When Frederick the Great learnt that the rural population of Pomerania still spoke Slavonian, he ordered *an end to be put to such a disgrace*, and the *disgrace* no longer existed towards the end of his reign. Many Western writers invite the Slaves to "submit to their fate willingly, and to disappear from off the face of the globe without leaving any trace of themselves, history having provided no

corner for them, and it being impossible to oppose the laws of nature and history." There can be no doubt that this will happen if the Slaves be left to defend themselves independently of each other. The Czechs, surrounded on all sides by Germans, will be the first to disappear; the turn of the other Slaves will soon come. Had not Russia suddenly put in an appearance on the confines of Europe, there would now have been no mention of the Slaves, and there would have been no motive for the revival of the spirit of Slavism. What Russia has thus commenced unconsciously, she *alone* can finish consciously. Not only is it impossible for the Slaves to avoid their fate—that of losing their national individuality—except by grasping the hand of Russia, but even if they were to set themselves up by some miracle, they would never be able to retain their independence, except by resting upon Russia. What international independence, based on their own individual strength, can the scattered Slavonian groups ever achieve, hemmed in as they are by the Germans and Magyars, and overcome by the masses and superior culture of the former, and the strong political organization of the latter? In these days, when Europe is divided into a few enormous masses, when only that State which can put forward half a million of soldiers has a right to separate existence, when even such old countries as Holland and Switzerland are beginning to fear for their future, who cares for such international rubble as the Czechs, Croats, and others, and since, moreover, that rubble is not recognized, is despised by powerful neighbours whom it

humiliates, and across whose history, hopes, and interests it suddenly places itself? The Slaves are numerous from Saxony to the Archipelago; their mass acting together is powerful, and might withstand the pressure of Germany. But how can the general connection of those masses be constituted? By union? The country of the Slaves is intersected in several directions by strips of alien and hostile races under whose dominion they still remain; the several Slave groups cannot give each other a hand without extraneous aid. In what language, moreover, is such a tribal union to speak? It is stated that at the Diet of Prague in 1848, the representatives of the several Slavonian groups spoke to each other in German. In this respect, as in everything else, they require unification, and they will never attain it by themselves. The Bulgarians will certainly not elect to use the language of the Czechs, nor the Czechs the Servian, as a common political vehicle of thought. Certain of the Slavonian tribes, moreover, such as the Bulgarians, Slovenians, and Slovaks, reduced to the position of lower classes of the population in their own country, must first of all become a nation, a process that requires time, and during that time they cannot live without tutelage. The Slaves are many, they are clever, brave, and they are thirsting with a growing desire for national life; but they can neither attain it nor retain it by themselves. The Slavonian world may be likened to the cosmical nebula which can only be converted into a world by a unifying centre of gravity.

The Slavonian race should endeavour to attain two objects, each separately,—an independent political and social life in their own country, and all, together, a closer tribal union with Russia, under her military and international predominance. Each tribe requires a Sovereign of its own for its domestic affairs, and a great Slave Tsar for the affairs of all collectively. Except under the latter condition, the independence of the Slaves of the Balkans and of the Danube becomes an impossibility. Were they to be freed to-day without uniting around Russia, they would return to the same or even to a worse condition to-morrow. The day on which Russia shall raise her real standard, there will be no truth more evident than this to every Slavonian and every orthodox Christian.

The covert enmity of Europe towards Russia and her constant fear of us are based on a recognition of the impossibility of avoiding such a solution of affairs, as soon as the necessary impulse shall have been given. Austria does not admit the independence of the Slaves of the Balkans from a feeling of self-preservation; but the Western Powers would not oppose that independence if they could rely upon the complete political independence of the provinces, should they even have been liberated with the aid of Russia. England was not in the least afraid of the liberation of Italy by the arms of France, of whose successes she is generally so suspicious. Europe jealously guards Turkey, from a conviction that her remains can never become independent in an inter-

national sense, and that by a natural gravitation they will, while escaping from the Germans, throw themselves into the arms, politically, of Russia. The Austro-Slavonian population is exactly in the same position.

But if the Slaves of the Balkans and of the Danube cannot do anything without Russia; Russia cannot, for the same reasons, do very much without them. Russia has Europe against her. She lived in peace with Europe as long as there was no mention of the tribal, legitimate task of Russia. The suspicion of Europe was aroused as soon as the nature of that task flashed across the minds of politicians, and her enmity was excited as soon as the historical individuality of Russia became sufficiently pronounced. This turn of affairs was inevitable. No race but the German was opposed to the unification of Italy. Many will oppose the unification of Germany if, as we may expect, she follows the programme of all the well-known insatiable pretensions of her people; but the whole of Europe stands up against the historical development of Russia, threatening, as it does, a still greater breaking-up of present systems; and it is only from the other side of the Atlantic that she is regarded with a friendly spirit. The first two revolutions—the Italian and the German—have slipped into history by accident; no one expected them in the form in which they were ultimately accomplished, and that is why they met with no decided opposition from the very first. The German revolution, however, is not yet quite finished. Russia cannot attain any of her objects, either in the

Eastern Question or in anything else, suddenly taking advantage of opportunities ; for a watch has long been kept for any step that Russia may take. She can certainly accomplish much at a time when Europe is a prey to that discord which recurs periodically ; but the more she accomplishes, the sooner will her rivals make up their quarrels in order to combine cordially against her. Russia has no reliable allies in Europe, beyond the members of her own family—the Slaves and the Orthodox. As soon as that family is thoroughly imbued with confidence in Russia, it will be necessary at the first favourable opportunity to assist it in rising, *i.e.* it will be necessary to reach that family by a victory at the outset. For the continuation of a prolonged struggle, or one that will have to be frequently renewed (a kind of struggle that is unavoidable), Russia will, by-and-by, have allies of her own.

The principal international difficulties of Russia in the Eastern Question, in Polish affairs, and in respect to her dominion in the Black Sea, are all wound up in a ball—it is impossible to touch one without the other. The Eastern Question cannot be divided in the Balkans, the Polish Question cannot be unravelled at Warsaw, and the Black Sea Question does not terminate in the Bosphorus. All three difficulties are tied up in a common knot, which lies on the Middle Danube. As in the fairy tale the horrors of the enchanted castle are dissipated only by a blow given to the magic shield hidden in its secret recess, so also the political difficulties of Russia, apparently

without any issue, can only be solved by a blow the direction of which was indicated long ago by Prince Paskevitch. None of the questions by which Russia is assailed can be seized singly, because none contains within itself the substance of the entire question, but only presents one of its sides: the substance is, the Pan-Slavist Question. The task is not easy of accomplishment, but that is just the reason why Russia requires allies, and exactly those allies which she can obtain in such a cause.

We have seen the impossibility of opening the Slavonian Question in the southern group of Slaves. Russia cannot reach that group, and besides she has nothing to do there. As soon as the affairs of the northern Slave family are satisfactorily arranged, Turkey will lose the roof under which she is now living out her numbered days. Nor could any efforts on the part of the Maritime Powers prolong her existence for a single year under such circumstances. Russia will, in all probability, come into collision with an European alliance on the Middle Danube, but she will scarcely meet one in Turkey.

It is clear Russia cannot permit the fate of the debatable zone of her outer borders to be decided in a sense unfavourable to her interests. Meanwhile it is beyond doubt that the fate of that region will be settled in a fully hostile sense to Russia, in the measure in which any foreign intervention, from whatever quarter, shall have been admitted. In other words, Russia will breathe freely only after she has settled the affairs of her outer borders by her own

power, with the aid of the sympathetic forces which are now crushed, and without asking leave of Europe. But for this purpose it is first of all necessary to think a little about those sympathetic forces and to inspire them with the assurance that they have a common interest with Russia.

Speaking more positively, the solution of pending questions in a sense hostile to the interests of Russia, means a solution which shall transport the question from the outer to the inner borders of Russia, which will inevitably take place if the international questions in which Russia is concerned are not settled by herself. Since the Crimean war, while Russia has maintained an attitude only of observation, all the most important political events in Europe have decidedly been to the prejudice of Russia.* It will be the same in the future. Considering the general absence of sympathy with Russia, it would be wrong to rely on mere fate and opportunity, and to shut Russia up within herself. A policy of expectation will not avert the decisive moment, but will create such a condition of affairs around that it will be impossible for Russia either to submit to her fate or to fight with success. The Eastern Question will sooner or later make a move of its own accord, apart from the will of Russia,—

* The war of 1859 gave Russia a new rival in the Eastern Question, and strengthened the enemy's camp by an army of 200,000 men; the Danish war impaired the position of Russia in the Baltic; the war of 1866 concentrated the forces and attention of Austria on questions of particular moment to Russia, and placed, as a reserve in her rear, an united Germany, bound to guarantee German interests; while the Candiot and Greek collision has rendered Turkey secure for many years to come, and has given her renewed confidence.

whether in consequence of internal events in the Balkan peninsula, or as the effect of some new combination in Europe; and it will then bring simultaneously to the surface all the political difficulties of Russia in Poland, in the Black Sea, even on the Caucasus.

The most ordinary event—a wide-spread insurrection in any part of Turkey which, after negotiations in the proper quarter, might give the Austrians a pretext for crossing the Save “for the protection of her security during the continuance of the troubles,” may serve as the beginning of the end. Europe would not in such a case divide into two camps for the defence of the hateful interests of Russia in the Eastern Question. England will always side with those who will defend the Balkan peninsula against Russia; Prussia will cover Austria with her guarantee, as in 1854, which is tantamount to a defensive alliance; France would not at such a time break with England, Austria, and Prussia, in order to clear the road to Constantinople for Russia. What will Russia have to do in such a case? Cross the Danube and leave Austria aside? That would be impossible. Should she march on Austria? But as yet, in the event of a war on the Eastern Question, all the probabilities are on the side of Austria. In addition to the fact that Europe will not allow her to be sacrificed, it is she, and not Russia, that holds the key of the debatable border. Supported by the guarantee of Prussia, by England, by Turkey, and by a revolution on the western frontier of Russia, which Austria can at any time incite, Austria can scarcely be deemed vulnerable from the side of Russia, considering also

the relation that the forces of the two countries bear to each other ; and it is more likely that the aggression will proceed from Austria. As long as the means of Russia for acting on the Austrian Slaves consist merely in a Slavonian Committee, which has not the means of carrying out one-tenth part of its modest desires, and while the means at the disposal of Austria for acting on the *Russian Slaves* consist of a Diet at Leopold (Lemberg) and of 100,000 Polish soldiers (for under the Austrian Standard all Galicians are Poles); as long as a Russian party does not exist, not only beyond the Carpathians, but even on the Vistula, while 7,000,000 of Russian subjects who confess to Polish priests belong, in an immense majority, in the event of war, to the ranks of the Austrian party,—the success of Russia is very little probable.

The active forces of Austria are backed by reserves, strong in numbers, which Russia does not possess; Austria may by a signal raise an organized insurrection along the whole of the western border of Russia, and cause her army to be subdivided. Russia, on the other hand, can do nothing of a similar kind to Austria. She may, perhaps, meet with sympathy, but not a single hand will be raised in her favour. There is consequently every probability that the Austrians would give battle with considerably superior forces. And what would be the consequences to Russia of the loss of a battle under circumstances such as prevailed in 1863? In my opinion the consequences would be the retreat of Russia beyond the Dnieper, and the restoration of Poland within the limits of 1772, with

an Archduke at the head. In such a serious struggle Austria would not show herself stingy as regards Galicia. Russia can of course be made much stronger than she is at present; it is a question of her natural resources, not of their present organization. But, nevertheless, until Russia raises the Slave Standard, while the Slave Question remains concentrated in the hands of Austria—materially on the other side of the border, and politically on this side of it—the chances of success in the case of a war, whether it be one on the Eastern Question as in 1854, or a war on the Polish Question as might have happened in 1863, will not be on the side of Russia. By taking the matter up properly, Russia can arm herself sufficiently, in order to defeat, with good luck, both the Austrians and a coalition on the Middle Danube; but even in such case, meeting only Austrians in Austria, Russia will not be in a position to secure the results of the victory achieved; and unless she is able to do this, the Eastern Question will always remain unapproachable to her. Within a few years it would become necessary to begin anew, and to act within the same vicious circle.

But what will happen if Russia is not victorious from want of allies, whether official or non-official? The Eastern Question will be solved in the sense of the negotiations of 1863, which removed the Austrian frontier to the Balkans, and gave up the Danube to its very mouth into German or Hungarian hands (which comes to the same thing in reality), and the consequence of which will be at no distant future the con-

version of the Black Sea into a Germano-Turkish lake until it shall have become entirely German. The war on the Eastern Question will inevitably be fought out (except on the sea-coast) on the western frontier of Russia. If Russia be not victorious, the question of the Turkish, as well as that of the Polish borders, will be solved in a sense unfavourable to Russia, *i. e.* Russia will be thrown a century back.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE POLICY OF RUSSIA ?

WHILE the dispute between France and Prussia continues, Russia can dispose of a certain measure of free action. When that dispute cools down or is settled, she will be compelled to take even the slightest difficulty by assault. Then, in all probability, will be realized that Anglo-Austro-Prussian alliance which is vastly more dangerous to Russia than an alliance of the Western Powers. As yet this consummation is only impeded by personal tendencies, the chivalrous character of the old King, and the indelible recollections of the House of Austria.

Russia's chief enemy is by no means Western Europe, but the German race with its enormous pretensions. The victory will be on the side of him who first gets the upper hand in that disputed ground,—Slavonic by race and German by political geography,—which divides two powerful nations. When the unity of the German race is completed in the bounds it has proudly assigned to itself, and when it begins to Germanize the Slavonians by Prussian measures, it will be too late to go to law. The Slaves outside of the boundaries of Russia will be its sacrifice. At the same

time the fate of the last great Aryan race will be sealed, with all that it promises for humanity, together with the fate of those political fragments of the orthodox world still preserved outside of Russia, and the import of Russia's history, with which no nation can part with impunity.

I shall speak my mind frankly: contemporary Russia has already grown out of the limits of race which give legality and firmness to the existence of a State, but has not yet attained that higher legality, of being the centre of her own special Slavonic and orthodox world. Russia cannot be consolidated in her present state; political, like natural, history, does not eternize undefined, unfinished phases. All depends now on the way in which the Slave Question is decided. Russia must either extend her pre-eminence to the Adriatic or withdraw again beyond the Dnieper. She has hitherto steadily advanced towards the solution of the historic problem which is before her.

At the time when the Slavonian and orthodox world began to be threatened with thralldom, the Muscovite Empire grew out of a Norman Principality and gathered round it the kindred Great-Russian race, and, later, all the branches of the Russian people, receiving in that process of absorption the legacy of the moral inheritance of the expiring Empire of the East, until at last it crossed the confines of a Slavonian world of alien origin. It is now either too early or too late to stop. Russia might have remained a great Power, without leaving in the West the boundaries of her race, and without taking

upon herself the mission, now converted into a duty, of regenerating the Christian East ; but she has done it, and it may be confidently asserted that she could not have done otherwise. As the head of a great race, gradually reasserting itself in her person, and as a refuge of all the orthodox, Russia has never enclosed herself within strictly defined boundaries, and has indeed been compelled to step beyond them. Russian Tsars have always borne and still bear a stamp of a peculiar character, which has not permitted them since the days of Ivan III. to confine themselves, exclusively, within the borders of their own Empire—the stamp of the only truly Slave and orthodox Tsars who lived amidst the ruins of the Slavonian or orthodox East of Europe. The idea of the community of the Slave race has always existed in Russia, in the form of a tendency to union with kindred by blood—first with the people of Great Russia, next with the Russian race in general, including all its transitional forms ; and it is therefore natural that that idea should have at last grown to its present significance. A similar tendency has never been manifested in Poland, which has always regarded herself in the light of a State, not a people, and she has therefore never been of importance to her kindred neighbours. Russia now stands amidst a Slavonian world that is not Russian, and that is divided by an arbitrary line between her own dominion and that of Germany. At the same time, the consciousness of the identity of race on either side of that line, and a comprehension of the community of material and moral requirements, are rapidly

ripening. This is the decisive hour that can never return, and that admits of no long hesitation. One of two courses must be adopted. Russia must either acknowledge herself to be a State in the sense of old Poland, and nothing more than a State, alien in her heart to everything outside the boundaries which have been accidentally given to her, and proceed in a decisive manner to root out every independent feature of the races of which she is composed or which are still to enter into her composition ; she must in such a case sincerely and openly renounce all thought of Slavism or of the orthodox East, and that community with them which envenoms her relations with Europe, casting them away from her and regarding them in the same manner as Prussia or France ; in fact, shutting herself up at home and maintaining her borders by force, until in the course of centuries they become merged with the body of the Empire ; or, leaving to the Russian people their inalienable pre-eminence in the Slavonian world, and to the Russian language its undoubted right to be the political and connecting tongue of that world, Russia must open her arms to all those who are nearer akin to her than to Europe, receiving them as younger but independent members of the same great family.

The *first* of these two decisions would be opposed to history—a dangerous road ! But that is not all. Although such a decision might have been possible under the reign of Catherine II., it is at present almost impossible. We have gone too far : tribal affinities have been aroused, the Eastern Question has been

raised, divided Poland has become an apple of discord between the Germanic and Russian races ; the general connection of all these difficulties has visibly asserted itself, and bears a well-defined name. The relations between Russia and Europe cannot be restored to a character of sincerity until the storm has burst and been dispelled. Russia will not be believed if she does not make use of all the means at her disposal, direct and indirect, in order to solve in her own favour questions that cannot be laid aside, and which will be decided to her disadvantage if taken up by any other Power. The *first* consequence of such a course will be that the Black Sea will be entirely taken away from Russia, and that a hostile predominance will be established on it. The *second* will be the hatred of the forty millions of Slaves and Orthodox whom Russia will have repelled, and who will certainly in such a case join the ranks of the enemy—a course which they will not be able to avoid. The *third* will be the excessive and crushing power of the German race, neighbouring Russia. The *fourth* will be a dispute about Poland, with all its possible results ; the united Germans will not voluntarily present their flank to Russia when they might protect it, nor make a present to Russia of a soil so well adapted to receive the seeds of Germanism in the future ; they will not let slip an opportunity of keeping Russia constantly on the alert ; they will have an account to settle with us on the shores of the Baltic. The *fifth* consequence will be “additional articles” relative to Finland, Livonia, Bessarabia, the Crimea. By renouncing

her historical destiny, Russia at the same time renounces the only allies on whom she can ever depend. We may gain a battle by our own efforts, and in our own name, but we cannot attain any objects. And at the same time we shall have to carry on a fight with the same obstacles and with the same enemies—a defensive, not an offensive struggle, not in order to terminate that struggle with a triumph, but merely to neutralize as much as possible its unfavourable issue. The historical move of Russia from the Dnieper to the Vistula, was a declaration of war to Europe, which had broken into a part of the Continent that did not belong to her. Russia now stands in the midst of the enemy's lines—such a condition is only temporary: she must either drive back the enemy or abandon her position.

But besides the two lines of action which have just been passed in review, there is a third—a middle course. This is the worst of all. It consists in irritating the whole world against us without doing anything in reality, and without making positive preparations for anything. The Lord forbid that Russia should enter upon such a course.

A war for the independence of any people or State, can only have that independence in view; there is nothing to be said to the contrary. As far as Russia is concerned, there is no sensible reason, moral, politico-economical, or military, for desiring new annexations in Europe; in the Russian mind there is no idea of converting kindred countries into subject provinces. Red Russia (Ruthenia) and Ismail are Russian by their nature. When the races allied to Russia by blood

shall have been completely liberated, the country watered by the Vistula becomes no longer ours. In the Slavonian and orthodox countries which surround Russia, there are six or eight principal centres of gravitation (this has not yet become sufficiently clear); and it is around these that the national units must collect.

If Russia continues to pursue her historical path, her peaceful efforts in favour of those who are nearest to her should not be indiscriminate, but in strict conformity with the peculiar conditions and requirements of each centre, taken separately. In addition to these natural groups, there is yet another place on the earth immeasurably important to Russia, having no national character, but from its exceptionable position too important to belong to any small people — Constantinople, with the surrounding suburbs, country, and straits. The most positive interests of Russia render it desirable that that city, far more eternal than Rome, should become the free city of a tribal union.

If there be any sense in history and the liberation of the Slaves be effected, their mutual relations towards each other and towards Russia will be determined by the force of things. The independence of each member of the liberated family in his internal affairs, a separate Ruler and separate political institutions, as may be most convenient to each,—all this is already settled by history. But independence in an international and military point of view is quite a different question. It is not enough to be freed, it is neces-

sary to remain free. In the present state of Europe there is no room for a heap of small nations, disposing of their own small armies, declaring war, making peace and alliances—each in its own person. And where?—Between the Russian and the future German Empire. And what, we ask, are those nations? Rejected races, not recognized by Europe, whose masters of yesterday will long continue to regard them as rebel subjects, and await a fitting opportunity for enslaving them anew.

To create such a condition of chaos, pregnant as it would be with quarrels, disorders, and internecine strife—a condition of which even to-morrow's existence would be uncertain, and which would be burdensome to all, and to the liberators in particular—would be taking upon oneself not the restoration, but the destruction of legitimate rights and of order in Europe, and holding up to derision one of the greatest of all questions in which the world is concerned. Affairs would, moreover, soon return to the same issueless condition. The liberated East of Europe, if it be liberated at all, will require: a durable bond of union, a common head with a common council, the transaction of international affairs and the military command in the hands of that head, the Tsar of Russia, the natural Chief of all the Slaves and Orthodox.

It is necessary that the citizens of each nation in the Union should have the full rights of a citizen of the entire Union. There is no necessity to place all the military forces of the confederate nations under the banner of Russia, after the model of the North Ger-

manic Confederation ; it will be sufficient if the active army, whether on a peace or a war footing, and whether at home or abroad, according to circumstances, should, together with the federal fortresses and the entrances into the Black Sea, be at the entire disposal and under the sole government of the head of the Union. The great confederate family, independent in each of its separate parts, will thus form but one State as regards the rest of the world.

Having determined to speak the whole of my mind, I must add the following. Although the personal relations between reigning families are of less importance now than formerly, yet some degree of importance attaches to them still. At the same time, in a Union of people of the same race, subjection to one head, the introduction of a variety of dynastic traditions, connections, and claims, might shake the foundations and perhaps destroy the newly-created unity. When the great Eastern family shall have arisen, its union can only be consolidated by a community of family thrones in one dynasty. Every Russian, as well as every Slave and every orthodox Christian, should desire to see chiefly the Russian reigning House cover the liberated soil of Eastern Europe with its branches, under the supremacy and lead of the Tsar of Russia, long recognized, in the expectation of the people, as the direct heir of Constantine the Great. The isolation of the Eastern world of Europe, of which the foundations were laid in days of antiquity, is only now bearing fruit, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years. There was a time when the unification of which

I now speak began to be called into existence by the House of the Jagellons, but it was purely in dynastic, not popular, interests. Russia grew up apart from the Union, which therefore remained fruitless.

I know that many will consider my conclusions mere poesy. But I have already expressed my conviction, based on a sufficient series of proofs; should my poesy not be realized, notwithstanding that the history of a thousand years leads irresistibly to its realization, Russia will scarcely remain, as a State, within its present limits. Nationalities have now begun to form into groups; ill-defined boundaries have become unstable; revolutions are effected with an astounding rapidity. The spirit of the age, in conjunction with the actual sense of the position of Russia, admits but of two solutions: either Russia as a local empire of the Russian race, or Russia as a concentration of the Slave and Orthodox world.

As regards the present, those two solutions may be expressed by two verbs: to await or to act.

At first the action of Russia can only be moral. The open recognition of her right to be the representative of a kindred world, and the bringing back under the parental roof, at the first opportunity, of the last enslaved remnants of the Russian race, and an unanimous impulse on both sides towards the common object—these should precede political unification. There will then be no lack of favourable opportunities; the nineteenth century is not an age of peace and tranquil prosperity in Europe.

But however great may be the unanimity, and how-

ever favourable the opportunity, this great question can only be settled by force, and at first by Russian force alone. Now, more than ever, Russia requires an army commensurate in its numbers and its quality with the magnitude of the task which she has before her—an army that shall be Russian, not in an abstract sense, but an army that shall be educated by military commanders, who understand the spirit of Russian soldiers and Russian regiments. With half-a-million such troops on the western frontier (which may be easily realized without exceeding the present expenditure), with unity and sole responsibility in command, according to the regulations of 1812, the task can be fulfilled. This can be as easily proved as that twice two make four.

It is this view of the political requirements of the age, and of the nature of the efforts which they demand, that I have made the foundation of my inquiries into “the Armed Forces of Russia.”*

It does not, however, follow, from the political exposition of the question, that my calculations will be incorrect if the objects above described are not contemplated. Expectation demands exactly the same development of force as action. Events cannot be averted by expectation; it is only the hour that will be chosen, not by Russia, nor for her convenience; the rest will remain unchanged. Russia will come into collision with the same adversaries, Prussia not excepted, and with the same number of soldiers and

* A pamphlet to which the present work is, as it were, the political key.—TRANS.

guns, on the subject of the inaccessible Eastern Question and its inevitable supplement—the insoluble Polish Question, as well as in respect to the accessible Pan-Slavist Question, with this difference only, that in the first case success will be as barren to Russia as Novara was to Austria; it would remove the danger to a distance; whereas, in the second case, even defeat would be as fruitful as the same Novara was to Piedmont, by drawing tighter the bonds between Russia and kindred races, and fortifying her, morally, for the future.

Many will, doubtless, find my sincerity indiscreet. I have more than once been blamed for it, but I nevertheless retain my conviction that a Russian should speak as openly of the affairs of his country as foreigners speak of them. Language is, in the present day, a weapon, and the unarmed cannot fight with the armed. I apprehend that the States and nations of which I speak are quite indifferent to my personal opinions on the Eastern Question. When, however, the idea of Pan-Slavism becomes a State idea, it will dazzle all like lightning; there will then also be no need for secrecy. Russian affairs will be in a fair way, only when the peasant women on the banks of the Moldau or on the slopes of the Balkans shall hush their children to sleep, saying, “Don’t cry, the Russians are coming soon to help us, and they will bring you lollipops.”

I have exposed my opinion on the Eastern Question. That opinion may be concentrated in a few words. The state of affairs is such, that the Eastern Question,

in the narrow sense in which it is generally understood, represents, as far as Russia is concerned, the problem of squaring the circle, which cannot be solved by any means in the present, and which leaves her no hope in the future. That question is a phantom, against which nothing can be undertaken, because it is a phantom, and the dependent half of another more important question. The Eastern Question, in its wide sense, *i.e.* the Question of the East of Europe, is a reality not easily attainable, because it contains a cosmical, historical problem, but still a reality, a live adversary with whom it is possible to struggle, and who may be overcome, with trust in Providence and confidence in self.

THE

RHODOPE COMMISSION

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THE
RHODOPE COMMISSION
AND THE
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'THE SPECTATOR'*



With an Introduction

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CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY
1878

THE RHODOPE COMMISSION.

INTRODUCTION.

IT MAY BE CONVENIENT to put together, by way of Introduction, the leading facts respecting the Rhodope Commission.

The origin of it is stated as follows in the Protocols of the Congress of Berlin :—

Count Schouvaloff announces to the High Assembly that Lord Salisbury has received telegrams which make mention of the most deplorable disorders in the Rhodope districts. According to this information a population of more than 100,000 souls is given over to complete anarchy ; villages have been burnt ; massacres, outrages, and terrible excesses have been committed. Their Excellencies are of opinion that an end should be put as quickly as possible to such atrocities. Count Schouvaloff observes that the districts in question are beyond the reach of the Russian Commander-in-Chief, and agrees with Lord Salisbury in thinking that European Commissioners should be sent, who should be authorised to insist on measures of repression. Count Schouvaloff is of opinion that the Governments should instruct their representatives at Constantinople to appoint delegates.

The President (Prince Bismarck) asks what means these Commissioners will have for enforcing their decisions.

Count Schouvaloff replies that he cannot say for the moment ; but in default of Russian troops, who are not in the district, it is hoped to obtain the support of the local authorities.

Prince Gortchakoff is of opinion that, while carrying out the mission entrusted to them, the Commissioners should equally undertake to verify the correctness of the facts reported to Lord Salisbury.

The result was that Lord Salisbury and the French Plenipotentiary drew up a resolution which the Congress adopted, and which provided 'for the immediate despatch of a European Commission, charged to verify *on the spot* the serious nature of the facts, and as far as possible to remedy them.' Writing on the same day, Lord Salisbury says that the proposed Commission was to 'proceed at once to the Rhodope districts, with the view of putting a stop to the horrors reported to be *taking place*.'¹

So far, then, the facts are plain. There is 'complete anarchy,' resulting in 'massacres, outrages, and terrible excesses,' in certain districts which are unanimously admitted to lie outside the territory occupied by the Russians. The Plenipotentiaries at the Berlin Congress accordingly instruct their respective ambassadors at the Porte to appoint a European Commission to verify the facts 'on the spot, and as far as possible to remedy them.' And because the scene of the disorders was beyond the jurisdiction of the Russian authorities, the ambassadors were 'to come to an agreement with the Sublime Porte' for the purpose of enabling the Commissioners to fulfil their mission.

In obedience to these instructions, the ambassadors of the Great Powers at the Porte, except those of Germany and Italy (who were absent from Constantinople), met and appointed a Commission, consisting of Consul-

¹ Turkey, No. 39 (1878), pp. 213, 270-1.

General Fawcett, the Austrian Military Attaché (Colonel Raab), the Second Secretary of the Russian Embassy (M. Basily), M. Challet (in temporary charge of the French Consulate), M. Graziani (Second Dragoman to the Italian Legation), and M. Müller (German Vice-Consul).¹

We are still within the instructions of the Berlin Congress. A Commission has been regularly appointed, consisting of English, French, Austrian, Russian, Italian, and German delegates. Turkey is not represented on the Commission, because the object is to verify and remedy outrages alleged to be committed on each other by Turks and Bulgarians in districts 'beyond the reach of the Russian Commander-in-Chief.' Sir H. Layard's telegram having originated the Commission, he took the lead in settling the programme. After the appointment of the Commissioners, he suggested that 'the inquiries of the Commission' should be 'extended to territory occupied by the Russian troops.' The Russian Ambassador objected, but eventually yielded. The Commission accordingly started, accompanied 'by a representative of the Porte' to secure, in obedience to the instructions from Berlin, 'the support of the local authorities.' But no sooner does the Commission begin its work than two Turks take their seats upon it, and act as members of it to the end, without, as far as appears, any authority whatsoever. To this innovation also the Russian Commissioner submits. But he protests against the Turkish authorities being allowed to select the witnesses and arrange the manner of giving evidence, and proposes a plan by which the veracity of the witnesses might be

¹ Turkey, No. 49 (1878), p. 2.

tested. He is overruled on both points by a majority of the Commissioners, and again yields. Presently, however, he declares that it is *ultra vires* of the instructions of the Berlin Congress to enter on an inquiry into the conduct of the Russian Army, as the majority of the Commissioners were proceeding to do, since the crossing of the Danube a year previously. He declared that it would take months to 'verify on the spot' random accusations extending over the whole territory occupied by the Russian Army since the commencement of the war, and that meanwhile the philanthropic object of the Commission, which was to 'verify on the spot' and remedy as far as possible existing disorders in 'the Rhodope districts, would be defeated.' Again he was overruled. Lord Salisbury, on being appealed to, approved of the extension of the inquiry into territory 'occupied by the Russians and Bulgarians;' but he expressly limited it, in point of time, to outrages committed 'since the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano.'¹ In spite of this, however, the majority of the Commissioners insisted on putting down as evidence every story told against the Russians since they crossed the Danube. In fact, all the 'atrocities' related in the *procès-verbaux* belong to dates anterior to 'the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano;' and not one of them was 'verified on the spot,' or, indeed, verified at all. From first to last there was not the slightest attempt at any real verification of the 'atrocities' charged against the Russians.

According to the summary of the Austrian Red Book (just published), which is given in the 'Times' of

¹ Turkey, No. 49 (1878), p. 4.

INTRODUCTION.

Dec. 10, it appears that the Austrian Ambassador agreed with the Russian Commissioner in thinking that the majority of the Commissioners were neglecting the real object of their mission in devoting their time to the collection of unproved accusations against Russia instead of verifying and devising remedies for disorders 'taking place' in the Rhodope districts 'since the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano.'

After the return of the Commission to Constantinople, M. Challet drew up a Report in which, as the German Commissioner justly complained, 'the Commission puts itself in the position and stead of the refugees.' The Report, in short, states, as proved facts, the wild unverified stories told by a number of Turkish peasants carefully selected and prepared beforehand by the local Turkish authorities. The Report is, in fact, an absurd melodramatic rhapsody, 'a comparatively insignificant part' of which, as the German Commissioner truly remarks, deals with the primary object for which the Commission was appointed. The bulk of the Report consists of accusations against the Russian army, intermingled with effusive panegyrics on M. Challet's zeal, conscientiousness, bravery, and general nobility of character. 'We entered upon our task without losing a single instant. Our zeal, however, has no special claim to credit, inasmuch as the object in view was the relief of distress. Having, fortunately, neither been arrested in my charitable enterprise by the fatigues of an arduous journey, nor by the sickness and dangers with which the path was strewn,' etc. 'Neither rain in torrents, nor the heat of midsummer, nor the attacks of illness, from which nearly all the members of the Com-

mission have suffered, have for one moment delayed our forced marches and our incessant work,' etc. These are specimens of the stilted heroics in which this ridiculous Report is couched.

Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,

M. Challet's head was evidently turned. He thinks that the eyes of all Europe are upon him, and he never allows us to forget that the fame of M. Challet is much more in his thoughts than the disorders in the Rhodope districts. His Report actually asserts that the Russians (General Skobeleff was the officer in chief command on the occasion) massacred in one day 60,000 Mussulmans—men, women, and children. His words are: 'This large mass of individuals, driven at the point of the bayonet, when once concentrated and crowded together in the gorge of Harmanli, was shot down, massacred, and drowned.' And an English Consul-General, together with an Italian second dragoman, put their names to this statement!

The result foretold by the Russian and German Commissioners and by the Austrian Ambassador followed. The question of relieving the Turkish refugees was merged in a bootless controversy about the degree of credibility which was due to the unverified gossip of some Turkish peasants. The President of the Commission (the Austrian Colonel Raab) and the German and Russian Commissioners refused to sign M. Challet's Report. It was signed by M. Challet himself, and by the Italian and English Commissioners. The Turkish signature must be put aside as unauthorised, and therefore invalid. It

now appears, moreover, that the Italian Commissioner, was 'directed' by his chief to withdraw his name from the Collective Report, and at the same time 'suggest' to his co-signatories to 'make a separate report, but in identic terms.' The reason assigned was that the presentation of a collective report 'would be an offensive proceeding towards Russia.' Discreditable, however, as such a suggestion was, the English and French Commissioners acted upon it;¹ and the result is, as Sir Stafford Northcote has just declared in the House of Commons (Dec. 9), that 'no single united report has been made by the members of that Commission.' Consequently 'it is not quite correct to speak of "the Rhodope Report."' This is an implied rebuke to Sir H. Layard, who speaks in his despatches of the 'Report of the Rhodope Commission.' There is not, and never has been, any such Report.

Sir Henry Elliot, in a despatch dated 'Vienna, November 26, 1878,' says that the Austrian Commissioner, 'though not approving the whole Report of his colleagues, did not represent the proceedings of the Russian troops in a more favourable light than they had done, in the separate Report that he had sent to his own Government, who, however, have not made it public.'² Colonel Raab's Report has now been published, and the 'Times' correspondent, who had it before him as he wrote, says: 'The report of Colonel Raab is confined entirely to the humanitarian part of the question.'³ So much for Sir H. Elliot's 'information, upon which I have no hesitation in saying your Lordship may rely.'

¹ Turkey, No. 50 (1878), p. 2.

² Turkey, No. 50 (1878), p. 4.

³ *Times*, Dec. 10.

Having himself, with the active aid of Consul Fawcett, frustrated the original aim of the Commission, Sir H. Layard complains that 'the result of the arduous labours of the Commission has only been to raise a controversy as to the authors of the unparalleled cruelties and outrages committed on the Mohammedan population of Bulgaria and Roumelia. This is greatly to be deplored.'¹ Doubtless : but that is precisely the result of which the German and Russian Commissioners forewarned him when Consul Fawcett and himself insisted on violating the instructions of the Berlin Congress in general, and of Lord Salisbury in particular. Having done his best to defame the whole Russian Army by charging it with a series of atrocities surpassing almost anything of the same kind ever attributed to the Turks, Sir H. Layard calmly observes : 'It appears to me that it would have been unnecessary for us to refer to the accusations made against the Russian troops' ! Then, in the name of common sense, why waste the time of the Commission and create discord among its members by industriously collecting 'accusations' to which 'it would have been unnecessary' afterwards 'to refer' ?

The facts are now before the reader, and he may judge for himself whether they point to a cunningly-devised plot, having for its object to oust or supersede the Russian administration in Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia. The fair fame of England is compromised in the matter, and it is to be hoped that Parliament will insist on probing it to the bottom before it adjourns.

On Monday evening (Dec. 9), Lord Elcho asked the

¹ Turkey, No. 49 (1878), p. 109.

Chancellor of the Exchequer 'whether any doubt is entertained' by her Majesty's Government as to 'the trustworthiness of the Report' signed by Consul-General Fawcett. 'That is a question very difficult to answer,' replied Sir Stafford Northcote. 'I can hardly answer his question.' The question was repeated the following evening, and then Sir Stafford Northcote answered:—'Her Majesty's Government did place reliance upon the Report of Mr. Consul-General Fawcett, and in consequence they were considering proposals for the relief of the sufferers.' Her Majesty's Government, then, believe that in one day the Russian Army, under the command of responsible officers, butchered in cold blood 60,000 helpless beings, men, women, and children, besides committing other atrocities, of which specimens are given on pp. 17-18 of this pamphlet. And, believing all this, the Government have not the courage to address to the Russian Government such a denunciation as they addressed to the Porte in Lord Derby's famous and futile despatch of Sept. 21, 1876! They will content themselves with 'considering proposals for the relief of the sufferers'! The English Commissioner on the Rhodope Commission durst not sign a collective Report because it 'would be an offensive proceeding towards Russia.' And now the English Government dare not call Russia to account for crimes in which her Majesty's Ministers profess their belief, and which, if true, ought to exclude Russia from the pale and courtesies of Christendom. Is it really come to this?

I.

THE RHODOPE COMMISSION.

IF but a twentieth part be true of the crimes charged against the Russian Army in the *procès-verbaux* of the Rhodope Commission, and adopted in the Report of some of its members, what we have really to deal with is a stupendous and inexplicable portent. We have before us the spectacle of some 300,000 men, embracing the choicest specimens of the manhood of All the Russias, transformed suddenly, silently, causelessly, as by some Circe's spell, from the likeness of ordinary humanity to the similitude and appetites of a herd of infuriated swine. No Turks, no Chinese, no horde of Tartars from the Steppes of Central Asia, have ever behaved as the Russian Army in Bulgaria is said to have behaved in the documents just published by the British Government. Officers and men alike succumbed without a struggle to this mysterious epidemic of depravity—the intrepid Gourko, the gallant Skobeleff, the phlegmatic Todleben, as well as the peasant from the Ural Mountains, or the Cossack of the Don. One day we see the humanity of the Russian Army tested under extraordinary provocation, and passing through the ordeal unscathed; on the morrow, we behold that same humanity degraded below the level of the brute. The splendid self-restraint of the Russian soldiers in the Shipka Pass, helping to dress the wounds of the red-handed murderers who had just treacherously tortured their comrades to death, was witnessed and attested by honourable men from all parts of

Europe, though Sir Henry Layard threw doubt upon it, until even the Turks admitted it. Colonel Wellesley, English Military Attaché with the Russian Army in Bulgaria, was instructed by his Government to inquire into the conduct of the Russians, and this is his answer:—‘The result of the inquiries I have made, not only of Russians, but of Englishmen, have led me to the firm and honest conviction that the statements of Russian cruelties are entirely without foundation. I had many opportunities of questioning those gentlemen (correspondents of English newspapers), some of whom represented papers decidedly hostile to the policy of Russia, but they one and all emphatically denied having witnessed any such acts as those of which the Russian soldiers have been accused. On the other hand, they have testified to many acts of kindness on the part of the Russians towards Turkish prisoners, with whom they even shared their rations.’ Colonel Brackenbury, who went over the Balkans and back with Gourko, testifies as follows:—‘With regard to the so-called Russian atrocities, I do not believe one word of them. The Cossacks certainly plunder, but I have not been able to find a single authenticated case of murder or personal violence, beyond striking; and then it is more often the Bulgarians who are struck for ill-behaviour to the Turks, than the Turks themselves. Having accompanied more than one army in the field, I can vouch for the fact that the Russian behaviour to the Turks is, as a rule, easier than was the hand of the Germans on the French.’ Similar evidence might be accumulated indefinitely. And the conduct of the Russian Army in Armenia is vindicated by the same class of testimony. The ‘Times’ correspondent with the Turkish Army, Captain Norman—an avowed philo-Turk—writes as follows, at the close of the Armenian campaign:—‘I must now, in the most emphatic manner, deny all reports of Russian atrocities in Armenia. I have had the privilege of accompanying Sir Arnold Kemball throughout

this campaign, and should any atrocities have been committed, I should assuredly have seen or heard of them. . . . All Mahomedan villages are left untouched, cattle feeding on the pasture land, the crops ripe for the sickle, and all seems as if smiling peace, not grim war, was around us.' Sir H. Layard had reported a frightful massacre of Mussulmans at Ardahan by the Russians. Captain Norman investigated the matter on the spot, and pronounced the accusation absolutely false. 'The fugitives spoke in the highest terms of the Russians, who treated the sick and wounded with the greatest consideration, sending the worst cases to their own hospitals for treatment, and distributing the others among the neighbouring villages. . . . Grain also has been distributed among the frontier (Mussulman) villages, to sow in their fields. This treatment, so foreign to what soldiers and villagers receive from their own Government, has produced a most favourable impression.' And this, in spite of the fact, personally vouched for by Captain Norman, that the Turks slew all the Russians who fell into their hands, hale or wounded.

. Now, if we accept the evidence collected by the Rhodope Commission, we must believe that an army which behaved in this unusually humane manner changed its nature all of a sudden, and committed, on a scale of appalling magnitude, atrocities of which the following may suffice as specimens:— They decapitated non-combatants of both sexes wholesale. They amused themselves by cutting off men's hands and women's breasts by the score at a time. They beat men almost to death by the bastinado and the knout, varying the amusement by crucifixion. They deliberately roasted men, women, and children to death. They gambled on the sex of an unborn infant, and then ripped up the mother to decide the point. General Skobeleff, of whose gentle heroism we have heard so much, drove myriads of men, women, and tender babes into a *cul de sac*, and slaughtered them by thou-

sands. Of children alone 2,000 were sacrificed in one day to the appetite for carnage of this Russian Moloch. Now, seriously, is all this credible? We do not say that it is not; but we do say that, if true, it is a fact unique in the history of our race. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*. Yet what the heathen satirist deemed impossible in the case of any human being is here established against a whole army, if we believe the accusations collected by the Rhodope Commission. Surely the evidence which would suffice to prove a moral miracle of so startling a nature must be at once irrefragable and overwhelming. Let us examine it. Certain women 'fled before musket and artillery three months ago.' Such is the accusation. The Commissioners take note of it, and wait for further proof. Their patience is not severely taxed, for we read, 'At this moment, the balls which had been fired into their villages are produced.' This appears to be considered decisive against the Russians, and so another batch of witnesses enter. A Turk swears that he was present when the wife of a certain Moustapha was 'disembowelled, and the foetus placed on the point of a bayonet,' by some Russians lodging in her house. The outrage was committed for the mere purpose of satisfying an idle curiosity as to the sex of the child. 'The narrator of this fact was present at the scene. He even received so severe a bastinado that he nearly died of it.' There were two ways of testing the veracity of this witness. The husband of the murdered woman might have been produced, and the feet of the witness might have been examined. So severe a bastinado would certainly make a cripple of him for months, and would leave marks which he would carry to his grave. The Commission simply listen to his evidence, believe him, and let him go. Captain St. Clair, erewhile British officer, Polish insurgent, Brigadier-General of Circassians in Bulgaria, and at the time of the Commission's visit Commander-in-Chief of the Rhodope insurgents, 'learned, through his officers, that an old man was

crucified on trees. He did not see this.' Yet we think the sight was worth a visit—if not in the interest of humanity, at least for the novelty of this new kind of crucifixion. ('Trees' is no misprint, for the plural is used in the French version as well.) A group of witnesses from Tirnova depose as follows:—'They left their country on the arrival of the Russians. The latter made them lay down their arms, and inflicted unheard-of cruelties upon them. They cut off the hands of twenty-four persons, and took them up to a height which might be reckoned at twice that of a minaret, from whence they were hurled over a precipice. The women [not one exception is admitted] were outraged. One of the sufferers succeeded in escaping, and gave information to the Turks, amongst whom were those who are now giving evidence to the Commissioners, and who themselves buried the bodies of the victims.'

Here was a remarkable scene, easy of verification. When the Russians entered Tirnova it contained 15,000 inhabitants. The tragedy must have been witnessed by hundreds. The 'height' from which the handless men were precipitated must be well known, and equally so the graves of the victims, whose mutilated corpses would still bear witness to the crime. Why did not the Commissioners send a trusty witness to Tirnova, to prove or disprove the evidence? Why did they not call for the solitary 'sufferer' who escaped? At least, did it not strike them as odd that persons who had left Tirnova 'on the arrival of the Russians' should, nevertheless, be still there to 'bury the bodies of the victims.' No: nothing of all this struck the Commissioners. *Credimus quia impossibile* would not be a bad motto for the Report to which some of them appended their names. Our faith is less robust; it prefers evidence which is credible to that which is not. And there happens to be credible evidence of what took place in Tirnova 'on the arrival of the Russians.' Mr. MacGahan, of the 'Daily News,' entered Tirnova with the van

of the Russian Army, and his account is that 'nearly the whole Turkish population fled' before the Russians arrived, 'carrying off their goods and chattels.' He adds :—'Fifty Turkish families have remained here, quite undisturbed and unmolested.' ('Daily News Correspondence of the War,' vol. i., p. 243.) But here comes 'Nazifé, of Boyasley (a village an hour's distance from Kyzanlik).' Let us hear what she has to say, for our friend the 'Pall Mall Gazette' has made much of her evidence :—'The first time the Russian Army arrived at Kyzanlik,' says Nazifé, 'it placed pickets in all the neighbouring villages, to prevent the inhabitants from leaving. Ten days later the battalions arrived, and began to disarm their husbands, and then massacred them. They collected all the women, took the youngest. . . . The men were bound, and beheaded. They bound their hands,' says Nazifé, 'stretched them on the ground, and then slashed them like a salad. In a village of thirty houses, ninety victims have undergone this horrible fate.' Such is the story of Nazifé, and she 'begs these gentlemen to be good enough to make inquiries,' in order to test her 'simple truth.' The 'gentlemen,' however, are so overcome by the pathos of the scene, that they evidently take Nazifé's 'simple truth' on trust, and call for the 'women of Samakow.' This is a pity, for Nazifé's story is not so impressive at a distance; and we, who have our nerves under control, are, by the negligence of the Commission, put to the trouble of verifying her 'simple truth.' 'The first time the Russian Army arrived at Kyzanlik,' it had the good fortune to be accompanied by Colonel Brackenbury and other foreign correspondents. Colonel Brackenbury arrived with Gourko's army at Kyzanlik on July 17th, and he stayed there for ten days. He made excursions into the neighbouring villages, and took particular pains to investigate accusations of atrocities, which were even then circulated from Constantinople against the Russians. He wrote three letters detailing his experiences; they fill four columns of the

'Times' and they are lying before us as we write. The extracts which we have already given are from these letters; and no one can read them without seeing at once that the story told by Nazifé is a pure fiction, carefully conned and rehearsed, in anticipation of the visit of the Rhodope Commission. But the Miso-Russians (if we may coin a phrase) are hard to convince. We will therefore support Colonel Brackenbury's testimony by that of a naval colleague on the staff of the 'Times.' Captain Gambier, who was with the Turkish Army, visited Kyzanlik on August 18th, a month after Colonel Brackenbury, and when Gourko's army had retreated across the Balkans:—

'I went,' he says, 'to find out what they [Turks] had to say about the treatment received from the Russians during the stay of the Russian Army. I think I may say that I cross-questioned at least eighty, many of these being Jews, who have less interest in misrepresenting the state of affairs, and a few well-to-do Turks, apparently telling the truth. From all these the same story was obtained,—namely, that while the Russian Regulars [there were no Russian Irregulars, unless the Bulgarian Legion is meant] were there, they were not only not molested, but kindly treated. The Turkish medical officers who remained throughout the whole Russian occupation testify to the same thing, and say that an officer visited the hospital every morning, and made inquiries as to what was wanted by the sick and wounded.' (See 'Times' of September 6th, 1877.)

But the story of which most has been made is the 'massacre,' as it is called, of Harmanli:—

'Your Excellency,' says Consul Fawcett, 'has only to read the depositions taken by the Commission, to understand the ruthless barbarities practised by a savage soldiery on helpless women and children; anything more horrible than the butchery at Harmanli I cannot imagine ever happened in the history of the world. Consider a line of from 15,000 to 20,000 arabas, laden with household goods, with men and children struggling through the deep snow, being suddenly attacked by wild horsemen. The men, with their knives and a few guns, did their best, and kept the cavalry off till

nightfall. Next morning, infantry and artillery appeared upon the scene, and if testimony given in the most simple manner is to be believed, commenced firing grape and musketry on this helpless mass of human beings. . . . In addition to this, a savage butchery went on among the arabas, and scenes with the women too horrible to describe.'

That picture of 'the men with their knives and a few guns' beating off a cavalry charge of 'wild horsemen' 'till night-fall' does infinite credit to Consul Fawcett's imagination; and as for 'the depositions taken by the Commission,' even when 'given in the most simple manner,' we know by this time what to think of them. On the whole, we prefer the testimony of an English eye-witness, whose veracity and painstaking accuracy have been verified beyond the reach of cavil. The correspondent of the 'Daily News' investigated the facts at the time and on the spot. His account of the matter is recorded on pp. 389-392 of the second volume of the 'Daily News Correspondence of the War,' and we are in possession of other independent accounts substantially the same, but giving fuller details. What happened was this:—When the Russians advanced from Plevna, Suleiman Pasha ordered the whole Turkish population to fly, alleging that the Russians intended to massacre them. He bade them also, as attested by English witnesses, to devastate the country as they went along. These orders were obeyed on a large scale, and how thoroughly the fugitives ravaged the villages through which they passed the despatches of Consul Brophy and other accounts tell but too plainly. The Russians sent a detachment of cavalry in advance to reconnoitre, and also to reassure the fugitives and turn them back to their homes. Near Harmanli this cavalry detachment came up with a bivouac of some 60,000 retreating Turks, guarded in the rear by two battalions of Turkish infantry. 'But they [*i.e.* the infantry] dispersed,' says the 'Daily News' correspondent, 'and retired, with little

attempt at resistance.' And then the following scene took place:—

A squadron was sent into the great assembly of waggons, to find out what it was. They rode on without receiving a single shot, until they were right alongside, and within a few paces of the train of arabas occupying the road, when, from behind the waggons, out from under the rude coverings, and from all sides, came a rattling volley, which emptied some saddles. Then it became evident that a ferocious resistance was to be made. So this squadron retired, and preparations were made to attack the collection of waggons, for it sheltered not only the rear-guard [of Suleiman's retreating army], but also no one knew how many armed peasants. But before the attack began in earnest, the panic caught in the bivouac, and spread like wild-fire. The immense band of refugees ran away with the soldiers to the mountains, leaving cattle, carts, and all their movables which they could not seize upon at the moment. The cause of the panic was the appearance of Skobelev's cavalry in the valley of the Maritza, in front of the bivouac. The result of it was, doubtless, the death of thousands upon thousands of Turkish peasants, who are now in the mountains, without clothing or food.

A most frightful tragedy unquestionably. The guilt of it we leave to the equitable judgment of the reader. And here we must stop, for lack of space. But there are several most important questions yet to be cleared up, questions which touch closely the honour both of the Russian and English Governments. Meanwhile, we invite the verdict of the public on the facts placed before them in this article. We have supplied them with materials for forming their own conclusions on our statement of the facts. If that statement is fair and accurate—and we challenge the most hostile scrutiny—we are fixed in this dilemma: there has been a most iniquitous conspiracy against truth and justice on one side, or the other. On the one hand are groups of Turkish peasants, of whom the world knows nothing, except that they have the strongest possible motives for making out a case against the Russians. On the other side are British Consuls and officers of well-known reputation, bearing her

Majesty's commission in the Army and Navy, besides independent and honourable witnesses belonging to other nationalities. These two classes of witnesses testify to certain alleged facts, at the same time and in the same places, and their testimony is absolutely destructive, the one of the other. The circumstances preclude any possibility of mistake.

II.

THE 'PALL MALL GAZETTE' AND THE 'SPECTATOR.'

IN our article on the Rhodope Commission last week we were careful to confine ourselves to a summing-up of the evidence on both sides, leaving our readers to form their own judgment on the facts which we had fairly and accurately placed before them. On one side were groups of unknown and deeply prejudiced Turks; on the other, English gentlemen, including some British officers of repute and of unquestioned honour and veracity. The former accuse Russian soldiers, under the orders of their superiors, of committing atrocities of the most appalling description, and with such circumstances of publicity and notoriety as would have made concealment absolutely impossible. Some of the latter (*e.g.*, Colonel Brackenbury and Mr. MacGahan) affirm that they were present where and when those atrocities are said to have been committed, and that nothing of the kind took place; on the contrary, that the Russian Army, both men and officers, behaved towards the whole Turkish population, military and civil, with singular forbearance and humanity. Others (*e.g.*, Captain Gambier, of the British Navy, an avowed philo-Turk, and Colonel Wellesley, the Military Attaché sent specially by the British Government to report on the conduct of the Russian Army) declare that, after the most careful inquiries at the time and on the spot, they could not discover a scrap of evidence of any atrocities at all committed by the Russians. Besides other witnesses,

Colonel Wellesley examined correspondents of English newspapers who were present at the places and on the occasions indicated, some of them 'representing papers decidedly hostile to the policy of Russia; but they one and all emphatically denied having witnessed any such acts as those of which the Russian soldiers have been accused,' and with equal emphasis 'testified to many acts of kindness on the part of the Russians towards Turkish prisoners.' Captain Gambier visited, within three weeks of the alleged occurrence, the scene of perhaps the most abominable of all the atrocities charged against the Russians. He 'cross-questioned at least eighty, many of these being Jews, who have less interest in misrepresenting the state of affairs, and a few well-to-do Turks, apparently telling the truth.' He also examined 'the Turkish medical officers who remained throughout the whole Russian occupation.' 'From all these the same story was obtained, namely,' that throughout 'the whole Russian occupation, they were not only not molested, but kindly treated.'

Such is, in epitome, the statement which we placed before our readers last week. After examining it for two days, including the undisturbed repose of Sunday, the 'Pall Mall Gazette' felt bound to offer to its readers what, we suppose, it wished them to consider a reply. And a wonderful reply it is. In brief, it comes to this:—The 'Spectator' belongs to the class of 'professedly religious journals,'—which will be news to our readers. This being its character, it follows that the 'Spectator' indulges in 'wicked methods of controversy.' These 'wicked methods' are divided by our contemporary into two categories. First, the 'Spectator' has been guilty of quoting as evidence 'the letters of the "Times" correspondents (!), and the letters of the "Daily News" correspondents (!).' Now here we must complain that our contemporary is a little too hard upon us. We remember occasions (witness certain articles on Russian

'atrocities' in Turkestan), in which our contemporary himself appealed to this very class of testimony with unquestioning faith. And now, when we have followed, *longo intervallo*, the example which he set us, he accuses us of resorting to 'wicked methods of controversy' ! It comes to this, then:—When men like Colonel Brackenbury and the late Mr. MacGahan give evidence against Russians, they are to be believed implicitly. When they give evidence in favour of Russians, their evidence is to be dismissed contemptuously, with two marks of ironical admiration. Our contemporary offers no explanation of this singular paradox. He lays it down as an ethical axiom too self-evident to need the support of argument. And there we are obliged to leave it. Our second 'wicked method of controversy' consists in 'deliberately suppressing' facts which tell against our side of the question in dispute. Here our contemporary does condescend to give his reasons, as follows:—

What said the French Commissioner on one occasion ? This:—
'From the moment the victims unanimously declare that they have taken to flight in face of the misdeeds of the Russian army the Commission ought to endeavour by every possible means to ascertain whether these accusations are well founded. *But every time that they have desired to examine into details, &c., or proceed to take fuller evidence in order to learn the value of the depositions, the Delegates of Russia and Germany have offered a persistent opposition.* No answer was made to this statement : it passed without objection or protest. And there it stands in the *Report*, and it has been quoted a dozen times into English newspapers. But the 'Spectator' deliberately suppresses it ; and no wonder.

The French Commissioner does make the imputation here attributed to him. But it does *not* 'stand in the Report ;' and as to the rest of our contemporary's criticism, we appeal to the record. On the very page from which he takes his quotation it is recorded that the only one of the accused persons who happened to be present repelled as follows the Frenchman's imputation :—'M. Müller, in order not to repeat

what he has already said, will not reply to all that M. Challet has just observed. He does not consider that he ever opposed the proceedings of the Commission so long as it confined itself within the limits of its instructions.' And yet, with this staring him in the face, our contemporary says: 'No answer was made to this [M. Challet's] statement; it passed without objection or protest.' 'As for M. Challet, we claim to be as good judges of what the *procès-verbaux* contain as he is. We have not—though the *Pall Mall Gazette* makes the insinuation—characterised the French or any other Commissioner as 'Turkophile.' But we decline to accept the allegations of any of them without verifying them for ourselves. And there are special reasons which induce us to receive M. Challet's assertions with some degree of salutary scepticism. The Report—not of the Rhodope Commission, for the Rhodope Commission issued no Report—which her Majesty's Government has published, without any signature, was written by M. Challet, and it is replete with such loose inferences and such wild and turgid declamation as to convince sober persons that its author is a man who has not even a remote idea of what constitutes evidence. Two examples must suffice, out of many which lie before us. The Commission had seen the ruins of villages which had evidently been burnt. 'It was conceivable to every one,' moralises M. Challet, in the Report, 'that the man who was capable of kindling such a fire might also indulge in pillage and murder.' It is lucky for our officers in India that M. Challet has never been sent to write a voluminous report on their frontier warfare. In another part of the Report he claims credit for 'stating in general language acts to which thousands of victims *would have been able*' ('auxquels des milliers de victimes auraient pu'), 'one after another, to testify individually.' These are specimens of M. Challet's notions of evidence. One example will sufficiently illustrate his judicial fairness. After the return of the

Rhodope Commission to Constantinople, the Austrian Commissioner, who was Chairman of the Commission, wrote a note to his colleagues, in which 'he deeply regrets to have been unable to take part in the deliberations on the general and final Report, having only a vague knowledge of the first draft, which, in his opinion, *ought to be much modified.*' M. Challet, with a parent's love for his bantling, made a determined effort that 'this note should not appear in the *procès-verbaux*,' because, forsooth, it was 'written at a moment when the colonel is much weakened by suffering'! And it was only on M. Müller pressing the point repeatedly that 'the Commission decided to annex' the Chairman's written disapproval of the Report 'to the *procès-verbaux.*'

We had good reason, therefore, for not quoting the passage which our contemporary has accused us of 'deliberately suppressing,' in addition to the fact, which we shall presently prove, that the passage itself is not sustained by the evidence on the record. In order to a just appreciation of the issue which the 'Pall Mall Gazette' has raised, it is necessary to recall the origin, scope, and purpose of the Rhodope Commission. In consequence of a telegram communicated to him by Lord Salisbury, Count Schouvaloff proposed in the Berlin Congress (July 11th) that 'European Commissioners' should be sent to 'the Rhodope districts,' 'who should be authorised to insist on measures of repression' against the disorders which Lord Salisbury's telegram described. That telegram is based on a despatch from Consul Fawcett, in which the districts to be visited are named. They lie in a tract of country outside the lines of the Russian occupation. After some discussion, the Congress passed the following resolution, which was drafted by Lord Salisbury:—

The Plenipotentiaries of the Powers assembled in Congress at Berlin, moved by the reports which have reached some of them as to the present sufferings of the populations of the Rhodope and of the neighbouring countries, are of opinion that it is desirable to

come to an agreement with the Sublime Porte for the immediate despatch of a European Commission, charged to verify on the spot the serious nature of the facts, and as far as possible to remedy them.

In a despatch to Mr. Cross, written on the same day, Lord Salisbury describes this Resolution as follows:—

It was agreed that the Ambassadors at Constantinople should be instructed to concert with the Porte the appointment of an International Commission which should proceed at once to the Rhodope districts, with the view of putting a stop to the horrors reported to be taking place in that neighbourhood.

According to these instructions, the purpose of the Commission was to verify and remedy 'horrors reported to be *taking place*' in districts declared in the Congress to lie outside the Russian occupation. ('Turkey,' No. 39, pp. 213, 270-1.) And because 'the districts in question are beyond the reach of the Russian Commander-in-Chief,' 'the Ambassadors at Constantinople' were instructed to arrange with the Porte 'the immediate despatch' of the Commission—'a *European Commission*,' remember. 'In execution of the instructions which they have received from their Governments, upon a decision of the Congress of Berlin,' 'the Ambassadors of Austria, England, France, and Russia, and the *Chargés d'Affaires* of Italy and Germany appointed Special Commissioners for this purpose;' and the Special Commissioners consisted of representatives of these Powers *exclusively*. ('Turkey,' No. 49, p. 2.) Turkey's function in the matter was limited to the duty of affording facilities for the inquiry; and for the excellent reason, that the scope of the inquiry was confined, by the instructions which gave it being, to the territory within Turkish jurisdiction, and outside the frontiers of the Russian occupation. There were two things, therefore, which the instructions from Berlin did not authorise. They did not authorise the presence of any Turk on the Commission, nor did they authorise any inquisition into

the conduct of the Russian Army. The 'horrors' to be investigated belonged to the 'present'—'horrors reported to be taking place' at that time, and 'in the neighbourhood.' ('Turkey,' No. 39, p. 213.) So far we are within the intentions and instructions of the Plenipotentiaries at Berlin. But before the Commission started on its mission, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople 'objected to the inquiries of the Commission being extended to territory occupied by the Russian troops, and proposed that if they commenced in Mount Rhodope, they should end at the Russian lines.' (p. 1.) This was overruled by the majority, on a plea which Consul Fawcett afterwards honestly admits to have been an entirely erroneous one. (See Inclosure 15, in No. 10.) Prince Labanoff yields, and it is agreed 'that the Commissioners should have full powers to proceed to any district they might think fit to visit.' Instructions were drawn up in that sense, and as the Commission originated in Sir H. Layard's telegram, of course he took the lead in the deliberations. In fact, the instructions of the Berlin Plenipotentiaries were quietly put aside, and the scope and purpose of the Commission were completely altered.

On the way to the scene of their labours, Consul Fawcett wrote a violent despatch to Sir H. Layard, denouncing the Russians, and prejudging the whole case. We give him credit for good intentions, and pass on.

When the Commission is fairly started on its inquiries, two Turks—a Pasha and a Bey—mysteriously appear upon the scene, and coolly take their places without any authority, as members of the Commission. (p. 6.) To one of these—Naschid Pasha—is entrusted the very important duty of selecting the witnesses (p. 14), and 'the Kaimakam' (Turkish lieutenant-governor of the district) 'undertakes the duty of carrying this arrangement into execution.' (p. 19.) The mode of procedure was to invite, through the Turkish officials, certain villages to send 'delegates' to give

evidence. Each group of 'delegates' was to choose a spokesman, or spokeswoman, to represent their case to the Commission. The Russian Commissioner, seeing the opportunity which this afforded for repeating manufactured and carefully-rehearsed evidence, proposed that the Commission itself should select the 'delegates.' 'The majority of the Commission reject this procedure.' (p. 19.) At least, urges the Russian Commissioner, let the Commission itself, and not the Turks, select the spokesman or spokeswoman whom they shall examine. Again 'the majority' vote 'against this proposal.' (p. 19.) And with these facts before him, our contemporary, repeating the fiction of the author of the Report, asserts that 'the delegates of Russia and Germany have offered a persistent opposition' to 'every' proposal to test the credibility of the evidence. Seeing that the majority of the Commission had set at naught the original instructions, and were simply bent on making out a case against the Russians, the Russian Commissioner entered a protest against the regularity of the proceedings, denounced, 'in the most formal and categorical manner,' 'the false assertions and odious calumnies' of the witnesses, because 'the fugitives who have been produced had been previously prepared and taught by those who prompt them; and what confirms him in this opinion is, that the individuals whom the Commissioners encountered accidentally on their road held entirely different language.' The truth of this important assertion is tacitly admitted; and M. Müller proceeds to characterise the evidence as 'details of pretended misdeeds' which 'seem incredible.' (p. 26.)

In the teeth of these facts, the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' in a leading article of November 2, declares 'that, so far from questioning the credibility of the witnesses brought before them, the Russian and German Commissioners contented themselves with opposing the reception of the evidence, on the plea that it related to matters beyond the competency of the

Commission to investigate.' Finding his remonstrances unavailing, the Russian Commissioner 'begs the Commission to have the goodness to suspend its labours' till he has had time to consult by letter his chief at Constantinople. Consul Fawcett retorts (p. 28), 'If M. Basily returns to Constantinople, that is a matter of indifference to Mr. Fawcett, who will continue his mission to the end.' After this, it is puerile to assert that the Russian Commissioner prevented the Commission from verifying the accusations. If his remonstrances were 'a matter of indifference to Mr. Fawcett' while he was hunting up stories against the Russians, they would have been equally 'a matter of indifference' to him, if he wished to verify those stories. But our contemporary hazards some evidence in proof of his bold assertion that 'the *Russian Commissioner*'—the italics are not ours—'refused to allow proof of the witnesses' statements as often as the other Commissioners would have put them to the test.' His first proof is an imperfect quotation from pp. 63-4. Somebody, unnamed, suggested 'supplementary investigations.' M. Leschine, a youthful subordinate, whom M. Basily, on his retirement, left merely to watch the case, enters a general protest, and withholds his assent. The 'Pall Mall Gazette' insinuates, accordingly, that M. Leschine and M. Müller prevented the verification of evidence. What the *procès-verbaux* say is, 'that several other members do not agree' to the proposition made. There is not a word about M. Müller. Our contemporary's next proof is so extraordinary that we must state it in his own words:—

A little girl eight years of age declares that she suffered outrage from three men; and 'a doubt having arisen in the mind of one of the Commissioners as to the veracity of the child's statements, Mr. Fawcett proposes that the doctor attached to the Commission should proceed to a medical examination.' This proposal, we then read, is supported by M. Challet, and 'opposed by M. Müller.' And here let it be noted that M. Leschine's objection to this evi-

dence was maintained ; he said that 'to enter into these details and to cross-examine the child amounts to instituting an inquiry into the conduct of the Russian troops.' And so it is throughout.

What does the reader naturally conclude from the evidence placed before him in this extract ? Clearly that Mr. Fawcett and M. Challet were anxious to verify the child's story, that M. Müller led the opposition to it, and that M. Leschine struck in at the end in support of M. Müller, and thus defeated the proposal. Let the reader look at the *procès-verbaux* (p. 74), and he will find that the facts are as follows :—M. Leschine delivers his usual protest against the whole thing, *before* Mr. Fawcett proposes the medical test. *After* the proposal, M. Leschine makes no objection at all. The proposal is supported by M. Challet, and 'is opposed by M. Müller, *who is supported by MM. Raab and Graziani*' (the Austrian and Italian Commissioners). Naschid Pasha, who had no authority to take part in the deliberations at all, objects to the medical examination on account of 'the religious principles of the inhabitants of these districts.' 'The verification, therefore, will not take place.' Our contemporary insinuates that the medical examination was opposed by M. Leschine (which is not the fact) ; he suppresses the opposition of the Austrian and Italian Commissioners ; and knowing that 'the verification' was finally stopped by the Turk, he leaves his readers to conclude that it was stopped by the Russian and German Commissioners.

Enough ! Our contemporary has forced us into a controversy which is not much to our taste. Our 'wicked methods of controversy' are now before our readers, together with the 'methods' of our accuser, and we leave the public to decide between us.

III.

A LAST WORD ON THE RHODOPE COMMISSION.

THE 'Pall Mall Gazette' of last Saturday admits that it 'has little or nothing to say' in reply to our article of the same date. It would have been prudent to have said that 'little or nothing' in as few words as possible. Our contemporary has devoted about two columns and a half to the arduous task. The result, as might be expected under the circumstances, is about two columns and a half of verbiage, too inane to be dignified even with the name of sophistry. The only sentence in our contemporary's rigmarole which calls for remark on our part is his assertion that 'Prince Gortchakoff suggested the enlargement of the Commission's powers, so as to include an inquiry into the charges against Russia.' We reply, that Prince Gortchakoff suggested nothing of the kind, and we challenge our contemporary to the proof. Meanwhile, let him remember that what is now at stake is not the reputation of the Russian Army, or of the Rhodope Commission, but the reputation of the 'Pall Mall Gazette' for honest criticism. To our indictment of the good faith of its articles on the Rhodope Commission—an indictment proved by quotation and reference—our contemporary 'has little or nothing to say.' And there we leave him.

But the general question cannot be allowed to rest where it now stands. In the absence of any reply, we claim to have proved,—(1) That some person or persons at Constantinople violated the plain instructions of the Congress of

Berlin, by completely altering the scope and purpose of the Commission; (2) that a fraudulent majority was secured for the anti-Russian members of the Commission, by the foisting into it, after it had started on its mission, of two Turks, in violation both of the resolution of the Berlin Congress and of the action of the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople ('Turkey,' No. 39 [1878], pp. 270-1, and No. 49 [1878], pp. 2-3); (3) that this majority refused to test the credibility of the witnesses whom the Turkish authorities in each district were allowed to select for examination; (4) that in no single case did the Russian or German Commissioner prevent the verification of evidence (we challenge proof of any assertion to the contrary); (5) that the evidence has been disproved on all material points by independent English testimony; (6) that the President of the Commission, together with his German and Russian colleagues, refused to sign the Report, explicitly on the ground of their disapproval of it,—the two latter, moreover, denouncing the evidence, on which the Report professed to be based, as mendacious and untrustworthy. On the other side are the English, the French, and the Italian Commissioners (the latter was merely the second dragoman of the Italian Embassy). We dismiss the Turkish signature as a diplomatic fraud.

In this statement there is not a sentence which we are not prepared to prove. The following assertions are equally capable of proof:—The English Government is the only Government which has given even the indirect countenance of publication to the proceedings of the Rhodope Commission. The Yellow Book of the French Government, just published, does not even allude to the subject. Captain Ardagh, of the Royal Engineers, who was sent on a mission of inquiry to Bulgaria by the British Government, characterises, in an official report, as 'ridiculous' and 'exaggerated mendacity' one important assertion, repeated with suspicious uniformity

by all the Turkish witnesses examined by the Rhodope Commission—we mean the assertion, that ‘before the Russians came the Turks and Bulgarians lived like brothers.’ Whereas the object of the Berlin Congress was to remedy disorders then going on, in a district never occupied by the Russian troops, the signatories of the identic Report made it their business to procure evidence in support of the following recommendations, which they press upon their respective Governments :—(1) That the Turkish refugees could not safely return to their homes while the Russians remained in occupation of the country ; (2) that ‘it is necessary that a permanent International Commission, with full powers, should be established without delay’ in the very territory given over to temporary Russian occupation by the Congress of Berlin ; (3) ‘as an accompaniment, the institution of a mixed police.’ At the head of this police, Consul Fawcett ‘ventures to suggest’ ‘that some of the English gendarmerie officers now here [i.e., among the Rhodope insurgents] might be of great service.’ Among these officers was Consul Fawcett’s own brother, who was allowed to give evidence against the Russians, in spite of the protests of the Russian and German Commissioners. The French, English, and Italian Commissioners, together with the Turkish interlopers, suggested, in addition, a grant of money from the Great Powers to the Turkish refugees (M. Challet modestly suggests ‘an expenditure of some millions,’—‘quelques millions de dépenses’). (Does he mean of francs, or of pounds sterling?) It will surprise no one that any amount of Turkish evidence was forthcoming in support of these proposals. But the English Government has taken the responsibility of publishing the proceedings of the Rhodope Commission, and it must consequently go forward or backward. Some action in the matter is absolutely incumbent upon it.

IV.

WE challenged the 'Pall Mall Gazette' last week to prove its assertion that 'Prince Gortchakoff suggested the enlargement of the [Rhodope] Commission's powers so as to include an inquiry into the *charges against Russia*.' We also gave our contemporary the reference to the Protocols of Berlin, where the facts are accurately recorded and Prince Gortchakoff's own words given. The 'Pall Mall' met our challenge by quoting certain words which Sir Henry Layard wrote from Constantinople, and in which there is absolutely nothing about any 'charges against Russia.' As we do not intend to recur to the subject, we will state the facts very briefly. In the Berlin Congress Count Schouvaloff proposed that 'European Commissioners' should be appointed 'to insist on measures of repression' against 'deplorable disorders in the Rhodope districts,' which Lord Salisbury had reported to him. Count Schouvaloff added, with the tacit approval of Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury, that the districts in question 'are beyond the reach of the Russian Commander-in-Chief.' That being the case, Prince Bismarck expressed a doubt whether the Commissioners would be able to 'enforce their decisions.' Count Schouvaloff admitted the difficulty, but 'hoped to obtain the support of the local authorities.' Prince Gortchakoff then suggested that 'the Commissioners should equally undertake to verify the correctness of the facts reported to Lord Salisbury.' But 'the facts reported to Lord Salisbury' were disorders then going on in districts which

were specifically named in Consul Fawcett's despatch, and which were admitted unanimously in the Berlin Congress to lie beyond the outposts of the Russian occupation. There was no question of any 'charges against Russia.' Instructions in this sense were sent to the Ambassadors at Constantinople (those of Germany and Italy were unfortunately absent). After a protest from the Russian Ambassador, it was agreed to depart from the Berlin instructions so far as to extend the inquiry to the regions occupied by the Russians. Lord Salisbury, on being appealed to, approved of this; but, in so doing, he expressly limited the inquiry to events which happened 'since the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano.' Nevertheless, all the 'atrocities' charged against the Russians in the Report sent home by Sir H. Layard belong to a period anterior to the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano. The very worst of them are said to have taken place within a month after the Russians crossed the Danube, and when they were accompanied by a swarm of foreign correspondents, who, one and all, have borne witness to the extraordinary humanity of the Russians towards the Mussulman population. No wonder the Ambassadors at Constantinople—all except the British—have declined to have anything to do with such a Report. Having met our challenge by an irrelevant quotation from an irrelevant source, the 'Pall Mall Gazette' exclaims triumphantly, 'We should like to know what the "Spectator" says to that?' He has now our reply.

THE TREATY OF BERLIN

AND THE

ANGLO-TURKISH CONVENTION.

REPORT

OF

The Eastern Question Association.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFATORY	3
BULGARIA	4
BOSNIA	9
MONTENEGRO	10
SERVIA	11
GREECE	12
ASLATIC TURKEY	15
CYPRUS	19
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS	20

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This Association was formed at the National Conference, December 8th, 1876, at St. James's Hall, for the purpose of watching events in the East, giving expression to public opinion, and spreading useful information. Persons accepting the basis of the Association, which may be obtained on application, are invited to become Members, and to forward their contributions to the Treasurer, WM. MORRIS, Esq., 26, Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, W.C. Cheques may be crossed Messrs. PRADS and Co.

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PREFATORY.

The time has come when it is proper to congratulate the friends of the Eastern Question Association on the escape of the English nation from the danger of a war to uphold the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire, and to review the settlement of the Eastern Question, as affected by the Treaty of Berlin, by that of San Stefano, so far as it is not altered by the Treaty of Berlin, and by the secret Convention between England and Turkey. In so far as these treaties have effected results conformable to the policy which has been advocated by the Eastern Question Association, it will be a duty and a pleasure to commend them; and, in so far as their makers appear to have acted with the intention of promoting that policy, the commendation bestowed upon the treaties will redound to the credit of the treaty-makers. The policy upheld by the Eastern Question Association has been throughout the same, namely, that in the settlement of the government of the various territories concerned the well-being of the populations inhabiting those territories should be the first thing to be considered, and not the interests, real or supposed, of the Governments of other nations, whether bordering upon them, or at a distance from the scene.

2nd September, 1878.

THE TREATY OF BERLIN

AND THE ANGLO-TURKISH CONVENTION.

BULGARIA.

The Treaty of Berlin, in so far as it deals with Bulgaria, may conveniently be considered under the following questions :

- I. How does it affect the Treaty of San Stefano ?
- II. How does it affect the population concerned ?
- III. How does it affect the relation of Russia towards them ?

I. The Treaty of Berlin divides in two the Bulgarian Principality created by the Treaty of San Stefano, the Balkans, speaking roughly, forming the frontier between them. North of the Balkans the arrangements of the Treaty of San Stefano are left almost intact. The two treaties agree on the following points : the conditions under which the new Prince of Bulgaria and his successors shall be elected ; the mode of drawing up the constitution for the Principality previous to the election of the Prince, security being taken for the rights of the minority, independent of creed or race ; the manner of calculating and paying the tribute due from the Principality to the Porte ; the absolute expulsion of Ottoman troops from the Principality, the razing of the old fortresses and the prohibition to build new ones, together with permission to the Porte of disposing as it thinks fit of the war material and other effects belonging to it ; the conditions upon which Mussulman and other landowners, residing outside the Principality, may hold and manage their properties ; the provision that the subjects of the Bulgarian Principality, while travelling or dwelling in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, shall be subject to the Ottoman authorities and laws ; the effective strength of the Russian army of occupation on both sides of the Balkans, its maintenance at the cost of the occupied territory, and its right of keeping up its communica-

tions with Russia not only through Roumania but also through the ports of the Black Sea, Varna and Bourgas. All these are provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano which are adopted and ratified by the Treaty of Berlin.

Let us now see wherein they differ, still confining our criticism to the north of the Balkans.

(a). The Treaty of San Stefano provided that "the introduction of the new *régime*, and the superintendence of its working, should be entrusted for two years to a Russian Commissioner"; but it invited the co-operation of European delegates at the end of the first year. The Treaty of Berlin provides that "the provisional administration of Bulgaria shall be under the direction of an Imperial Russian Commissioner until the settlement of the Organic Law;" after which "an Imperial Turkish Commissioner, as well as the consuls delegated *ad hoc* by the other Powers, signatories of the Treaty, shall be called to assist in controlling the working of this provisional *régime*." But the Russian Commissioner has already been at work six months since the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano, and the consular delegates have not yet joined him. The difference on this point, therefore, between the Treaty of Berlin and the Treaty of San Stefano is not a difference of much consequence.

(β). By the Treaty of San Stefano the provisional *régime* was to last two years. By the Treaty of Berlin it must cease nine months after the exchange of the ratifications of that treaty—that is, probably, nine months after the beginning of this month (September, 1878.) In that case the provisional *régime* will cease in the end of May next year. But it has been in existence already six months. The difference between the two treaties, therefore, is not a difference between two years and nine months, but between two years and fifteen months.

(γ). By the Treaty of San Stefano the military occupation of Bulgaria was "limited to an approximate period of two years." But Prince Gortchakoff, in his reply to Lord Salisbury's despatch of April 1, explained that, "this term being approximate, the Imperial Cabinet was quite ready to shorten it as much as may be possible without endangering the success of the difficult task which it was proposed to work out in the interests of peace."

It has been shortened accordingly by the Treaty of Berlin to a period of nine months after the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty. But six months of the time stipulated in the Treaty of San Stefano have already elapsed; so that the Russian military occupation will last fifteen months at least. Here also the Treaty of San Stefano remains substantially unaltered.

(8). The only absolutely new stipulation of the Treaty of Berlin with respect to northern Bulgaria which is of the least importance is that which declares that "no dues shall be levied in Bulgaria on goods passing through that Principality."

It is plain from the foregoing that, so far as northern Bulgaria is concerned, the Treaty of San Stefano remains practically intact. The modifications made in it by the Treaty of Berlin are few and slight. Southern Bulgaria, on the other hand, has been taken out of the Treaty of San Stefano by the Treaty of Berlin, and placed under new arrangements and a new name—Eastern Roumelia. This important change is due entirely to the English Government.

So much, then, as regards the relation of the Treaty of Berlin to the Treaty of San Stefano in respect to Bulgaria on both sides of the Balkans.

II. Let us now consider the changes made by the Treaty of Berlin, as they affect the population of the territory included in the Bulgarian Principality of the Treaty of San Stefano. The condition of those north of the Balkans remains unchanged, except in so far as they are politically and commercially weakened by the subtraction from them of Eastern Roumelia. It is nevertheless a condition quite abreast of anything that this Association hoped for at the period of the St. James's Hall Conference in December, 1876.

Article xiii. of the Treaty of Berlin declares:—"A province is formed south of the Balkans, which will take the name of 'Eastern Roumelia,' and will remain under the direct political and military authority of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, under conditions of administrative autonomy. It will have a Christian Governor-General."

Let us see what "the direct political and military authority of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan" amounts to.

The Governor-General must be a Christian. He must be appointed for a minimum term of five years; and he must be a man approved of by the Great Powers. The organization of Eastern Roumelia, moreover, is to be effected by a European "Commission in accord with the Ottoman Porte"; and "this Commission will have to determine the powers and functions of the Governor-General, as well as the administrative system, judicial and financial, of the province."

The Sultan may garrison the frontiers of Eastern Roumelia, but it must be with regular troops, and Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks are expressly excluded. Moreover, "the regular troops destined to this service must not in any case be billeted on the inhabitants. When they pass through the province they will not be allowed to sojourn there." The province, on the other hand, is to be provided with "a native gendarmerie, assisted by a local militia." The officers are to be named by the Sultan, but they must be natives of the locality; and, as regard must be had to the religion of the inhabitants, and the Christians are in the majority almost everywhere, the officers will as a rule be Christians. Their nomination by the Sultan, therefore, does not come to much.

The Governor-General is empowered to summon Ottoman troops "in the event of the internal or external security of the province being threatened." Without such summons the Porte cannot send a single soldier into the province of Eastern Roumelia. The Ottoman troops have a right of way to their frontier garrisons; that is all. And even if the Governor-General, against all probability, should chance to summon the Ottoman troops out of their frontier garrisons, the Porte cannot comply with the summons without notifying the decision and its justification to the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople.

And this is what Lord Beaconsfield calls "restoring to the Sultan of Turkey . . . a rich and abounding country, which in area is equal to England and Wales!" What would Lord Beaconsfield say if Queen Victoria held Wales on the conditions on which the Sultan holds Eastern Roumelia?

Put briefly, then, the population of Northern Bulgaria will be as free as the Roumanians were before their independence, while

that of Eastern Roumelia will be as free, for all practical purposes, as Servia was before she got rid of the Turkish garrisons. Northern Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia are now on the high road to complete independence. It is only a question of time.

III. We now come to the last question. How do the changes made in the Treaty of San Stefano by the Treaty of Berlin affect the relation of Russia towards the populations of Northern Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia respectively? There can hardly be a doubt in the mind of any one who examines the question dispassionately that the influence of Russia will be increased by the Treaty of Berlin, while her opportunities for intrigue, if she is so disposed, are multiplied. The Bulgaria of the Treaty of San Stefano would have been a principality more populous than Roumania, and with larger capabilities for political and commercial development. Having obtained practical independence, with the certainty of absolute independence in the near future, neither prince nor people would have had any inducement to encourage Russian or any other intrigues, but every inducement to discourage them. Now the case is otherwise. The device of calling Southern Bulgaria by a new name will fail to kill the political aspirations of the Bulgarian race, and the presence of the Ottoman troops in the passes of the Balkans will only intensify the desire to undo the arrangements of the Treaty of Berlin, and revert to that of the Treaty of San Stefano. The history of the Danubian Principalities and of the Greek Kingdom proves the folly of attempting to arrest the natural development of political organisms by artificial fetters. As the Moldo-Wallachians never rested till they effected the union of their two principalities, as Greece will never rest till she has received the provinces which are her due, so Northern Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia will never rest till they have expelled the last Ottoman soldier from their soil, and effected their political union in spite of the Treaty of Berlin. And the Turkish garrisons themselves are sure to accelerate the crisis. As in Servia, so in Eastern Roumelia, they will be a thorn in the side of the Christian population. Collisions will occur; and, as Russia is the only power likely to help the Christians, she will have a fine field for her operations; while, in the event of another Russo-Turkish

war, the Ottoman troops in the Balkans will prove of no avail. To say nothing of the Balkans being turned, as the Plenipotentiaries of Turkey evidently think, (See Protocols pp. 242, 276), the Ottoman garrisons would be surrounded by foes, and "caught in a trap," to quote the expression of Lord Derby.

In this brief review it has not been considered necessary to discuss the question of the various claims of the Bulgarians and Greeks south of the Balkans. The great thing to be aimed at in the redistribution of European Turkey is to secure to each nationality the frontier best adapted to its future development. The Slav and Greek races are in some places so intermingled that it would be impossible to separate them geographically while leaving them in their present possessions.

On the whole, then, the following conclusion seems to follow inevitably from the facts of the case. The Treaty of San Stefano offered a better arrangement in regard to Bulgaria, north and south of the Balkans, than the Treaty of Berlin; better for the interest of the population, better as a bulwark against any dangerous Russian influence, and better as to promise of endurance. Still the arrangements of the Berlin Treaty are very tolerable. They practically extinguish the rule of the Porte on both sides of the Balkans, and only delay a little longer the hour of final deliverance.

BOSNIA.

By the Treaty of San Stefano the province of Bosnia, including the southern half of it, the Herzegovina, was left to Turkey. It was thoroughly disorganised and had been the scene of sanguinary struggles like those in South Bulgaria now re-named East Roumelia. The Treaty of Berlin has handed Bosnia over to Austria. We believe that there would have been no more difficulty in pacifying this province than in restoring order in Bulgaria south of the Balkans, and a temporary occupation by Austria, or by the troops of two or three of the great powers, would have sufficed for this as well as the nine months' occupation will suffice for South Bulgaria. The dismemberment of

Turkey in this respect is unaccountable, unless on the supposition that the support of Austria could be purchased on no lighter terms. But we regret to note that no stipulation for the freedom of religious worship in these provinces has been made; and that no clause of this treaty requires Austria not to exact tariff dues upon goods crossing Dalmatia and Bosnia. This neglect will seriously affect the importation of articles of English manufacture. These countries are at the present time open to the introduction of such goods, but, as they will in the future fall under the protectionist tariff of Austria, we fear that the markets will be henceforth closed against English goods.

MONTENEGRO.

The hard and unjust terms imposed not only upon Servia, but also upon the small and gallant principality of Montenegro are much to be regretted. This latter state has always been independent of Turkey, and by the Treaty of Berlin the Great Powers do but recognise an existing fact (see the 26th Article). By the 27th Article it is stipulated that civil and religious liberty shall prevail throughout Montenegro. This has long been the law of that principality. The 28th Article deprives this principality of the natural frontier of the Boyano River, awarded to it by the Treaty of San Stefano, and substitutes an artificial line drawn from the port of Antivari to the Lake of Skodra (Scutari); thus imperiling the maintenance of peace by making almost certain future disputes respecting the boundary line. The unfairness of the treaty however is most evident in the 29th Article. While Turkey is permitted by this article to erect fortifications on the frontier of Montenegro, and at the commencement of the present war it held upwards of eighty block houses around the principality, Montenegro is prohibited from erecting any defensive work on its most exposed frontier. Again, it is to possess no armed vessel. The maritime and sanitary police of the Montenegrin coast is to be in the hands of Austria. It must adopt the "Maritime legislation" of Austria, and it is not permitted to make a railway across the only part

of the territory over which such a way can be constructed without the permission of Austria. It is to have no control over the roads in the ceded territory. Such treatment of an independent power, unrepresented at Berlin, is contrary to all rules of international law and to every principle of justice. A small strip of territory is added to the principality, it is required to undertake the payment of a portion of Turkish debts, whilst at the same time the principality is prevented from making use of this piece of territory by constructing a railway over it. This is surely unjust to Montenegro. But these provisions are as unjust to England as they are to Montenegro itself. All these stipulations, for whatever purpose made, effectually exclude the goods of England from entering and passing through Montenegro. A railway from Antivari or from Zablack on the Lake Skodra, joining the Turkish railway at Mitrovitza, would open the trade of Serbia and of the adjoining countries to English goods. But by the Treaty of Berlin this trade is prohibited.

SERVIA.

The same jealous prohibition against English goods entering Serbia is in effect made by the 37th Article of this same Treaty. By this Article it is stipulated that Serbia shall levy no transit dues on goods crossing her territory. M. Waddington urged that the same law should prevail in Roumelia. Had this been accepted, English goods might have passed into Serbia without prohibitory dues, and Serbia might have found a market for her goods in England. The proposal of the French Plenipotentiaries to enact the same law for Serbia and Roumelia alike was not however insisted upon, and Serbia is thus made dependent solely upon Austria for the sale and purchase of goods. Now this series of unjust requirements deprives Serbia of the market which she was anxious to have had open to her in England, while England is prohibited from sending her goods to Serbia. As Serbia has a population of about 2,250,000, Montenegro of 240,000, Bosnia and Herzegovina of 1,200,000, these various stipulations have robbed England of a trade which

would at the present amount to several millions annually, and which is susceptible of considerable increase. And, since these countries are solely agricultural, and their requirements exclusively consist of manufactured goods such as calicoes, woollens, furniture and hardware, the net loss to England is great. Besides all this, we are by these one-sided stipulations prevented from obtaining that legitimate influence in these countries which commerce always draws after it, while we increase their alienation from us by the continual proof of our indifference and injustice.

GREECE.

The Eastern Question Association have always regarded with deep interest the claims of the Hellenic people in the European dominions of the Sultan, who have desired to be united to the Greek kingdom. England had a large share of responsibility in reference to the inadequate formation of that kingdom, and during the fifty years of its existence England has been the most active and the most trusted of the protecting powers. Considering the disadvantages of their state, the Greeks of the kingdom have made remarkable progress. This is questioned only by those who have not qualified themselves by observation, or by study of recorded facts, to form a trustworthy opinion. The description of Athens published by an English traveller nearly fifty years ago,* if compared with any fair account of the city at the present time, will prove that in their capital the Hellenic people have, in its extension, in the character of its architecture, in the evidences of wealth, in its public buildings, in its educational establishments, in the peace and order of its streets, made an advance which has not been approached in any part of the Sultan's dominions, and which, in proportion, has not been exceeded in any capital city of Europe.

The Greeks have never been false to those liberal principles upon which their kingdom was founded, and among the pro-

* Bishop Wordsworth's "Athens and Attica"

fecting powers they have looked to England as the grand example of a State upon which they desired that their own institutions should be modelled. England assisted in planting monarchy at Athens, and when, in consequence of misgovernment, there was a vacancy in the tenure of the Greek Crown, the Hellenic people did honour to England by the selection of an English Prince. Rejecting that proposal, the English Government aided in directing the choice of the present king, and in the negotiations which determined the cost of Royalty in Greece. The Association think it right to call attention to these and other antecedents of the Congress, because the comprehension of these facts is necessary to a right appreciation of the deference which the Greek Government and people have been prepared to pay to the counsels of Her Majesty's Government. M. Waddington reminded the Congress that a prince, who had not the incompetence of Otho nor the disqualification of the tender years in which King George attained the throne, refused the Hellenic Crown, because he considered "that Greece could not thrive under the territorial conditions imposed upon her," and upon this point it is instructive to remember that even the modest and becoming manner in which Royalty is maintained in Greece imposes upon the slender revenues of that kingdom a charge which is in proportion ten times as great as that borne by Her Majesty's Civil List to the revenues of this country.

We deeply regret that the "conditions under which Greece can thrive" have not yet been attained, nor can we feel confident that the great requirement of peace upon her borders will be established by the resolution of the Congress. The circumstances of Greece during recent years are well-known—how her northern frontier has been ravaged and harassed by marauders coming from the Sultan's territory, and how, in the south, her ports have been crowded with miserable refugees flying from the sight of atrocities which have been less notorious but not less cruel than the Turkish crimes of Bulgaria. In these circumstances, the claims of Greece upon the support of England in the Congress were urged by considerations alike of prudence, humanity, and policy. The Eastern Question Association have witnessed with painful regret the neglect of these claims by the

British Plenipotentiaries. The Association, observing the conduct of Her Majesty's Government throughout the course of recent hostilities, have never indulged the hope that the Greek people could, with due regard to their own interests, confide in Her Majesty's present advisers. But in sight of the fact that the denial of the legitimate claims of Greece, advanced with so much wisdom and moderation in the statement of M. Delyannis, was made in Congress by the First Plenipotentiary of Great Britain upon the very day after the ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention—a day to which the consideration of the proposals relative to Greece had been studiously deferred—the Association cannot doubt that these patriotic aspirations of the Hellenic people of Crete and of the Valley of the Olympus range, were rejected by the Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain, for the sake of obtaining the agreement of the Porte to that Convention. The Association are constrained to believe that the truth upon this most painful subject was expressed by one of their number who, in his place in Parliament, declared that "the plunder of Cyprus had been preferred to the freedom of Crete." The Association are in no way responsible for the confidence which the Greeks resident in this country misplaced in Her Majesty's Government, and are convinced that the pleas of the Hellenic representatives addressed to the Congress have not received satisfactory attention in the resolutions of that body. The arguments by which the diminution of Turkish territory was justified apply with unquestionable force to the island of Crete, which, as to population, is Greek, and which is doomed to insurrection and to misery so long as it remains under Mussulman domination. The interests of peace and progress, together with the real advantage of the Turkish Empire, would have been promoted by entrusting to the Greek Government in Crete an occupation similar to that which Austria-Hungary has undertaken in Bosnia and Herzegovina; while, in regard to the north, it is now admitted that the first Plenipotentiary of France proposed to cede Epirus and Thessaly to Greece, but that his British colleagues successfully resisted the proposal. The frontier which in consequence the Congress determined to recommend to the Porte fails not only to realise the due and natural hopes

of the Greek population, but has the intrinsic fault of suggesting a boundary the least likely of all to put an end to the lawlessness and violence which upon the now-existing division have been the torment of the Greek kingdom. In these circumstances, and with a view to secure the permanent peace and the progressive prosperity of that part of Europe, the Association will not cease to hope that the troubles of Crete may be speedily ended by incorporation with Greece, and that in the North the Hellenic kingdom may be extended at least to the mountain frontier of the Olympus line.

ASIATIC TURKEY.

This is the most important part of the whole resettlement, if a scheme containing so many seeds of future difficulties can be called a resettlement of the affairs of the East. It is also that on which we possess the fewest data. We can therefore only indicate in general terms what are the probable consequences of the agreements entered into by Her Majesty's Government.

The questions relating to Asia are dealt with partly in the Treaty of Berlin and partly in the Anglo-Turkish Convention.

The Treaty of Berlin recognizes certain territorial acquisitions made by Russia in Armenia, viz. the fortress of Kars and the surrounding country, that of Ardahan and the surrounding country, together with Batoum and a small district, whose boundaries do not seem to have been as yet precisely fixed, in the neighbourhood of that port. These annexations were always expected, and it is more surprising that Russia should not have taken more than that she should take this much. A large part of the population of the territory thus ceded, especially that in the valley of the Araxes, is Christian in faith and Armenian in race; the rest, consisting of Tatars, Kurds, Lazes, Tcherkesses, and Ottoman Turks, is Mohammedan. The transference is no doubt a gain to all these, but it is to some extent to be regretted as far as the Armenians are concerned.

The Treaty of Berlin also contains (Article 61) a stipulation that the Porte will carry out the ameliorations and reforms

demanding by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and the Porte guarantees their security against Circassians and Kurds. The Porte "will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application."

No machinery seems to have been provided for this purpose. Apparently each of the signatory powers has the right of calling on the Porte to fulfil this engagement, for there is nothing in the article to require them to act jointly for the purpose. It may become a point of some importance and nicety to determine what is, as respects England, the relation between this undertaking and that made to her separately by Turkey in the Anglo-Turkish Convention. It is, however, clear as respects the other Five Powers, that nothing in the Convention can derogate from the rights given them by Article 61 of the Treaty. And it will be no answer to any complaint made by them of the non-fulfilment of that article that the Sultan has put himself into the hands of England, and that it is she, and not Turkey, that obstructs its fulfilment.

The Anglo-Turkish Convention has been so fully canvassed in the recent parliamentary debates, as well as in the public press, that it is not necessary to deal with it at length.

Two constructions of its terms have been put forward. According to one of them, the military guarantee is conditional on the execution of the reforms promised by the Sultan, so that if they are neglected England may retire from her engagement to defend Turkish territory. There are, however, three objections to this construction. The first is that it makes no provision for the retrocession of Cyprus in case of the disappearance of the guarantee. The occupation of that island is stated to be conceded for the purpose of enabling the military defence of Asiatic Turkey to be conducted by England, and it might therefore be thought that if the reason ceased the occupation would cease also. But such cession is provided for only in the event (assumed to make a defence of the frontiers by England unnecessary) of the surrender by Russia of Kars and Batoum. This must proceed upon the assumption that the English military guarantee is to last as long as Russia's tenure of those places,

and is therefore to be irrespective of the promised administrative reforms.

A second objection is grounded on the language of the Convention. It would have been perfectly easy to make the promise of reforms reciprocal to that of military protection, and each conditional on the performance of the other. Such however is not the character of the terms employed, which make the promise of military defence quite irrespective, so far as appears, of the subsequent undertaking of the Sultan.

The third and most conclusive argument is to be found in the motive which has been declared to have driven England to conclude the Convention, viz. the necessity incumbent on her to prevent, for the sake of India, any further advance of Russia towards Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia. This interest of her own is of course quite independent of any reforms in the Turkish dominions, and will remain the same, whether they are introduced or not. If we attempt the military defence at all, we must carry it through none the less because the subject population is wretched. In fact, the worse the internal condition of Turkey is, so much the more likely is Russian aggression, and so much stronger therefore England's interest in maintaining the guarantee.

It follows from these considerations that the Convention must be dealt with upon the other of the two constructions, viz., as intended to subsist in all events, whether Turkey reform herself or not. This of course does not prevent England from retiring from it when she changes her mind as to the necessity of defending the Asiatic frontier. But it will make her retirement more difficult and not altogether honourable. The subjects of Turkey may well regard it as perfidious, and the rest of Europe as cowardly. That England will change her mind can hardly be doubted.

The effect of the Convention may be considered in two aspects, as regards the liabilities it imposes on England, and as regards the influence it will exert on the future of Turkey and her Asiatic subjects.

The liabilities of England are partly military, binding her to defend the Armenian frontier against Russia; partly civil, involving her in the administration of the Asiatic provinces. How

grave the former are, how vast will be the labour and the expense which their performance must require, it is not necessary to set forth in detail. As to the civil liabilities, an idea of their nature may be formed by observing what has been the course of British advance in India. We begin by advising a protected sovereign, we go on to supersede his administration, we end by deposing him and annexing his territories. This is the probable, one may almost say the necessary, course which events will take in Asiatic Turkey, if the policy of the Convention is adhered to. England will find herself with a second Asiatic Empire to defend, organize, and administer.

The question how the English Protectorate will affect the condition of the Asiatic subjects of the Sultan can hardly be profitably discussed till it is known what are the reforms which (Article I. of the Convention) are to be "agreed on between England and the Porte." Of course, the really important thing is not so much the reforms themselves, as put on paper, as the mode in which they are carried out, and the securities to be taken for their due execution. One cannot but expect, from the interference of England, some improvement in the condition of the subject populations. But it may be remarked that much will depend on the spirit in which England enters on her task, and on the men whom she employs. If the spirit is one of tenderness for the Turkish officials, suspicion of the Greek and Armenian Christians, and a selfish desire to think first of the supposed military interests of England; and if such reckless partisans as Sir A. H. Layard and some of our present Consuls have shown themselves to be, are allowed to guide our policy in Turkey, the Christian population need expect comparatively little benefit from our presence or action.

The conclusions at which we arrive, and to which we desire to call attention, are the following :—

1. That there is an apparent conflict between the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, Article 61, and those of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, Article 1; but that, in case of any question arising, the Treaty provisions, as being later in date, being public, and being adopted by the Seven Signatory Powers, will prevail as against those of the Convention.

2. That, as the reforms to be introduced in Asiatic Turkey

have not yet been agreed upon between England and the Porte, the Government should be urged to see that they are complete, to take effective guarantees for their execution, and to consider the special claims of such a large Christian population as that of Armenia to local autonomy.

3. That Government should be required to bring the scheme of reform before Parliament previous to sanctioning and adopting it.

4. That as the execution of the reforms will in the first instance be entrusted to the corrupt and incapable hands of Turkish officials, that execution should be carefully watched and reported on, and steps taken for having the state of the Asiatic subjects of the Porte brought at frequent intervals before the notice of the English public, so that the responsibility we have undertaken towards those subjects may be conscientiously carried out.

CYPRUS.

If the occupation of Cyprus by England could be regarded merely as the removal of its inhabitants from under Turkish rule, and the substitution of a better, then indeed it would be easy to defend it and pleasant to praise it. But unhappily the circumstances and conditions of the occupation are those, rather, of a simple acquisition by England of a maritime position more or less advantageous, by way of satisfying what is called British sentiment, and by way of furthering what are called British interests. The words of the treaty with Turkey purport, indeed, to couple her surrender of it with the assumption by England of a protectorate over her Asiatic territory; but upon this undertaking of ours, be it light or weighty, the possession of Cyprus has no bearing whatever. Cyprus is not so much nearer than Malta to any conceivable point of operation against Russia, but that Malta, which has harbours, and is on the way from England, will always be a better base of such operations for us than Cyprus, lying out of the way, with none. The alleged benefits of our holding Cyprus, whether as commanding the Suez Canal,

or as a depôt for the projected railway to India, or as a station for Indian troops, which are all very questionable, cannot here be discussed ; but conceding these, it is deeply to be regretted that England, while insisting on the voice of Europe in the Eastern Question, and while assuming to be the champion of Turkey against Russian aggression, should herself have secretly become one of the appropriators of Turkish territory by way of spoil.

The tenure under which we are to administer Cyprus without annexing it, subject to a payment of tribute to the Sultan, consisting of the whole surplus revenue, is derogatory to the dignity of the English Crown, and injurious to the people of the island. Many serious difficulties attend the determination of the legal rights of Englishmen, Cypriotes, Turks, and foreigners under this extraordinary arrangement. The condition for ultimate restoration to Turkey upon the abandonment by Russia of her Asiatic conquests is a foolish perpetuation of our present attitude of hostility to Russia, and is nugatory for any possible benefit to Turkey ; it can only operate to hamper ourselves in the future, when the time comes (as the history of our Ionian Protectorate seems to show that come it will) for us to hand over to the kingdom of Greece, to which it more properly belongs, a dependency which it is not for our interest or honour to retain.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

I. So far as Turkey in Europe is concerned, Russia gains rather than loses, by the changes made in the Treaty of San Stefano by the Congress of Berlin. Her gains are as follows:—

(a) The division of Bulgaria will probably drive the population on both sides of the Balkans into friendship with Russia, to be developed into open alliance when the opportunity arises. Too weak to stand alone, they will be tempted to lean on the arm which has helped them in the past and which is likely to aid them in the future. The Treaty of San Stefano would have made them strong enough to dispense with what no self-respecting nation

desires, namely, the enervating patronage of a powerful neighbour; and the planting of Turkish troops in the passes of the Balkans will serve no other purpose than that of keeping raw the rent which the Berlin Treaty has made in the Bulgarian nationality.

(3.) The Congress has put Serbia and Montenegro in a worse position than that in which the Treaty of San Stefano left them, and has commissioned Austria to occupy territory of which the reversion was claimed by the two Principalities in equitable proportions when the Porte ceased to possess it. By its occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina Austria will, in addition, so overshadow Serbia and Montenegro as seriously to impair their independence. It can hardly be doubted, therefore, that the two Principalities will side with Russia in the event of another Russo-Turkish war.

(7.) The Greeks openly accuse the English Government of having deceived and betrayed them, and are already discussing the prudence of coming to an understanding with Russia and the Slav Principalities. The English Government has publicly announced that Greece "can afford to wait" even in respect to the rectification of frontier authoritatively recommended by the Congress. The Porte has taken the hint, and has peremptorily refused to execute the "invitation" of the Congress. Greece will naturally blame the English Government for the failure of her hopes, and Russia will have the satisfaction of watching the alienation from England of a rising nationality that "has a future" on the borders of the Mediterranean.

(8) The extension of the Austrian frontier towards the Adriatic and the *Ægean* has irritated Italy and alarmed Greece; and the feeling of dissatisfaction in both cases has been intensified by the broad hint of Lord Salisbury, that Austria is destined to succeed the Turk on the shores of the Bosphorus. In Italy and Greece Russia will consequently find eager allies to aid her in resisting the realisation of the destiny which the English Government has promised to Austria.

II. These are Russia's gains as regards the modifications made in the European clauses of the Treaty of San Stefano. What

really important loss she has sustained it is difficult to say. The only territory in Europe claimed by Russia under the Treaty of San Stefano was that portion of Bessarabia of which the Treaty of Berlin has sanctioned the retrocession.

III. But it may be plausibly objected: "You prove too much. The Slav press of Russia has denounced the Treaty of Berlin in the strongest terms; and the Russian Government has been constrained to offer an apologetic defence of the concessions whith it made at Berlin. How is this to be reconciled with the foregoing argument?"

The answer is, that Russia is divided into two parties on the Eastern question. One party may, speaking roughly, be called Slavic Russia, the other official Russia. The former includes the great bulk of the nation, headed by the Emperor and the Imperial family. The supreme desire of this party is to liberate Eastern Christendom from the Ottoman yoke, the Slav portion of it in particular. It is not indifferent to the interests of the Russian Empire; but its first aim is the liberation of the Christians of Turkey; and it believes that this deliverance will eventually redound to the profit and glory of Russia. The official party, on the other hand, is numerically weak as compared with its rival, but it is strong in commercial and governmental influence. It considered the Russo-Turkish war a romantic mistake, forced upon it by an irresistible popular impulse; and the Treaty of San Stefano did not please it. This party has triumphed at Berlin. It has postponed the interests of the Christians of Turkey to those of the Russian Empire. Here then is the explanation of the amiable acquiescence of official Russia in the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin.

IV. As regards Asiatic Turkey, the Treaty of San Stefano remains practically unchanged. Russia retains Batoum, Kars, and Ardahan; and has only given up, in exchange for Khotour, a strip of territory which broke the symmetry of her new frontier, and of which her commanders therefore advised the surrender even before the meeting of the Congress of Berlin.

V. From these considerations there follow some necessary inferences :—

1. Official Russia has triumphed all round. England was her only dangerous opponent, and before the Congress met England bound herself secretly, in the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum, to surrender to Russia every point which really touched merely Russian interests.

2. It was this stipulation on the part of England, and not the calling out of the Reserves or the importation of Indian troops, which induced Russia to lay the Treaty of San Stefano unreservedly before the Congress. She entered the Congress, in fact, on her own original terms, and not on the terms sought to be imposed on her by England.

3. The onerous addition made to our National Debt is consequently a sheer and mischievous waste. It is sheer waste, because it has had no influence whatever either on the meeting of the Congress or on its results. It is mischievous waste, because, while adding to the burdens of the people, it has wantonly driven Russia, hitherto disposed by interest and inclination to cultivate the friendship of England, into an attitude of suspicion and hostility towards this country. The English Government, while giving Russia much, if not all she wanted, has contrived to do it in such a way as to arouse the antipathy and resentment of the whole Russian nation.

VI. The Anglo-Turkish Convention is a peril to England. Turkey has already refused to make any reforms except in her own way and on her own initiative. This is equivalent to a refusal to make any reforms at all; and inasmuch as our Government has declared that the Sultan is an independent Sovereign, and therefore must not be coerced, it follows that the Porte's share of the contract is already virtually cancelled. What, then, becomes of our part of the engagement? We must either "wriggle out of it," to use Lord Derby's expression; or we must spend English blood and English treasure in upholding the most immoral and debasing despotism now existing among civilized mankind. If our part of the Anglo-Turkish Convention is seriously intended

to be carried out, it practically amounts to an engagement on the part of England to retire henceforth from the political controversies of Continental Europe. "For if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan in Asia, as given by the definitive Treaty of Peace, England engages to join his Imperial Majesty the Sultan in defending them by force of arms." Henceforth Russia will be an invaluable ally to any Power which harbours designs hostile to England; for by a military demonstration on any part of the Asiatic frontier of Turkey she has it in her power to paralyse the influence of England in Europe. It may be open to question whether the acquisition of a ruined island in the Levant is a sufficient compensation for a policy which, if seriously entertained, will involve the effacement of England from the politics of Europe, by saddling her with the defence of a barbarous country which is as large as France, Italy, and Spain put together, and which lies at the same time at an immense distance from her base of operations, while it is close to the practically impregnable frontier which the English Government had, by secret treaty, previously ceded to the very Power against which she has undertaken to defend Turkey in Asia.

"We have brought back peace, but peace with honour." This is Lord Beaconsfield's way of describing the results enumerated above. Since, however, none of the Powers assembled at Berlin meditated war against England, to "bring back peace" does not seem a very great achievement. But have our Plenipotentiaries "brought back peace?" The Austrian occupation of Bosnia is due directly to them, and the immediate result of that occupation is a sanguinary war of which it is impossible to forecast the results. In Bulgaria and Greece, too, they have sown the seeds of future warfare; while the Convention with Turkey, if seriously intended, has placed the peace of England henceforward at the mercy at once of Russia and of Turkey. A "peace" which results in immediate war, and provocations to war is obviously an equivocal gain.

ON COMMUNICATIONS WITH BRITISH INDIA UNDER POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR FREDERIC J. GOLDSMID,
C.B., K.C.S.I.



A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION.

(Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their respective memoirs.)

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Note.

It should, perhaps, here be stated that, had the undersigned been aware of the existence of an Anglo-Turkish Convention, he would have considered it an impertinence to have mentioned the name of Cyprus at all. He was merely giving currency to a notion which he had spoken to others, which had been spoken of to him by others, and in which he had believed (in reference to communications with India) long before the date of his Lecture.

20th July 1878.

J. G. F. Smith

(For private circulation only.)

LECTURE.

Friday, June 14th, 1878.

Colonel H. YULE, C.B., R.E., &c., &c., in the Chair.

ON COMMUNICATIONS WITH BRITISH INDIA UNDER POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES.

By Major-General Sir FREDERIC J. GOLDSMID, C.B., K.C.S.I.

THERE can be no doubt that the possession of so vast a territory as British India brings with it many serious responsibilities. Among the more recent illustrations of this truth is the mode in which Government has dealt with the famine. It has administered to the wants of the hungry in the far East as it would have done at home; it has acknowledged the principle that a sovereign rule must be a paternal rule; that starving subjects must be fed as well as starving children; and that without distinction of distance, colour, or creed. We do not say that nothing is received in return for this expensive fulfilment of sympathetic duties. If England had only, on the credit side, a large field of honourable employment for her sons, and the *prestige* of a vast empire, it would be much; but she has these and more: she has an Asiatic army, to appear at a sudden call in this as well as any other quarter of the globe; thousands of Oriental soldiers to rise up and do her work in the West, should their presence be required on an emergency.

But one of our main responsibilities is that of communication. England must not only have a link with India by telegraph; she must also be always able to reach her practically and in substance, and the long sea route is out of the question in these days of rapidity of movement, when action is worthless unless it is independent of time, when practice treads on the heels of theory, and when execution almost overtakes design. To see how this is to be attained under all circumstances, independently of a long sea route, is then the object proposed in the present paper. In order to steer clear as much as possible of shoals in the shape of politics, I will, in the first instance, talk of countries and people as though we were on the best of terms with all; as if they were at our disposal to traverse and re-traverse with the same facility as we draw lines on the mute map before us; as if all we had to contend with

were physical difficulties and commercial considerations. I would ask leave, however, to include in the term "physical" the obstructiveness of robbers or of lawless tribes.

Nearly three years ago I had the honour of delivering a lecture in these rooms "On certain Roads between Turkistan and India, independent of the Oxus or of any Oxus Boundary." The two roads then described were supposed to connect the seaboard of Northern Persia with the Lower Indus, but the distances were great. The one from Enzeli, in the south-west corner of the Caspian, passing through Eastern Persia, Western Baluchistan, and Eastern Makran, was estimated at 1,870 miles; the other, from Bandar-i-gez, on the south-eastern shores of the Caspian, passing through Northern and Eastern Persia and Afghanistan, was reckoned 150 miles longer. We might possibly, as I represented at the time, reduce the two lines to much the same figure, *i.e.*, a maximum of 1,800, or a minimum of 1,500 miles. But then the Caspian is at an immense distance from England, and these roads, however important for an invading army, are not to be thought of as a means of passing British troops to and fro between Europe and Asia. In fact, I may state at once a proposition, the soundness of which should, without demonstration, be apparent to all present, that anything like complete overland communication of such a nature, if to be considered at all, must be considered as practicable by railway. How India is to be reached by this means is what we have now to examine, and in doing so I am quite aware that we shall tread upon somewhat debateable ground.

In the first place, unless the British Channel were bridged over or tunnelled under, we must use transports for crossing it; and the embarkation of troops at all would involve much trouble, provision, and expense; so much so, indeed, that the loss of a few days in a preliminary sea voyage might be found expedient, and the land-starting-point fixed in the Mediterranean, instead of a French or Belgian port. But in order to get some practical acquaintance with our proposed lines, whether in Europe or Asia, let us glance at what has been done in this respect by the telegraph.

Twenty years ago the revolt in India had been barely suppressed; there was no such institution as a telegraph to India, or even half-way to India, though the Red Sea cable may have been under preparation for laying and collapsing, and the Government were seeking, more or less in the dark, the means of meeting a requirement which events had shown to be most urgent. Ten years later, the failure of the first Red Sea cable had been nigh forgotten; the Government Officers had carried a cable from Karachi to Bushahr and the head of the Persian Gulf, had constructed land lines in Persia and Makran; and measures were being taken to secure safe and rapid communication with the cables through Europe and Asiatic Turkey on one side, and Europe and Persia on the other—amid loud cries, be it said, of dissatisfaction at the time occupied in perfecting so delicate and intricate a process. To-day there is a Red Sea cable and a land telegraph communicating with the Government cables, the successful working of which may be certified by the conclusive and convincing evidence of the daily press. As the

first-named line indicates our usual overland Indian route *viâ* Suez, I pass it by and speak of the other.

In 1868 we had made arrangements for as many as eight lines of communication towards India through the continent of Europe; five were *viâ* Turkey, and three *viâ* Russia. Of the first, that bearing more directly on Constantinople is through Brussels, Stuttgart, and Vienna, while the next most direct is perhaps by Paris and Munich. The sea passage from the Italian to the Albanian coast is naturally fatal to a continuous overland line through France and Italy. I do not think it would be profitable to discuss which route of these, or which route independent of these, should be selected for an Anglo-Indian locomotive; but the fact that there were ten years ago five acknowledged main lines of telegraph between London and Constantinople, and that these lines might be subdivided into numerous branch and subsidiary lines, may help us to determine how far the completion of present projects to connect the city of the Sultan with the capitals of Western Europe would suit our purpose in providing one grand line of railway communication with British India. The three telegraph lines through Russia may now be looked upon as merged in the Siemens line, which, starting from London, passes through Lowestoft and Emden, Berlin, Warsaw, Odessa, Kertch, and Tabriz to Tehran, where it is taken up by the Government wires, and its messages are transmitted to Bushahr and Karachi. But the chances of a completed railway to Tehran are hardly equal to those of one to Constantinople, and a "concession" would not break ground so freely on the shores of the Caspian as on those of the Mediterranean. As regards Baron de Reuter's proposed line or lines, I am unable to speak of the present state or prospects from any personal acquaintance with details. The silence of the press for so long a period tends to the supposition that the question has been adjourned *sine die*, and probably such is the reality. It is not unlikely that the approaching revisit of the Persian monarch may give rise to renewed talk on the subject, but it would be premature to anticipate the result of a hypothesis.

It may be truly said that a telegraph line is carried over tracts which do not admit so easily the fixation of rails and sleepers or the passage of a locomotive. But, except for protective purposes, posts and wires are not usually brought into difficult places where these can conveniently be avoided—and even where skill, energy, and determination make light of physical obstacles at the onset, it must be remembered that it is not the mere laying down a telegraph line which has to be considered, but also its maintenance and possible repair in after years. Those whose duty it is to keep in order a great work or public building are not always (perhaps it would be more true to say are seldom) imbued with the spirit of the designer or architect; to use a more familiar comparison, the nurse or governess does not care for the child with the affection of the mother. In the case under consideration we must have something which can readily be got at by ordinary guardians, in all weathers, and on all occasions of break or emergency. Therefore, in countries like Persia and Asia Minor, where the mountains are lofty and continuous, and where roads and passes may be

found impracticable to bipeds as to quadrupeds; or, like Mesopotamia and Turkish Arabia, where broad rivers have to be spanned, with much cost and care, and floods avoided or provided against with a skill dependent on local experience, the direction followed by lines of telegraph is important to the due selection of a line of rail. Besides, independently of engineering considerations, there is the same necessity, in both operations contemplated, to deal with the people of the country, whether civilized or half civilized, or sheer robbers and savages. The Bakhtiari of Persia, who will purloin a few yards of wire, or the Kurd of the Turco-Persian frontier, who will make the insulator a mark for his matchlock, may find an object of equal solicitude in the wood and iron of railway contractors, to say nothing of a general love of disorder, and dislike to authorities and regulations.

Not very long ago, M. Ferdinand de Lesseps proposed to take a railway line from Orenburg to Samarkand, and from Samarkand to Peshawar. The distance had been reckoned at some 2,400 miles, and the difficulties to be surmounted will be understood by the fact that the passage of the Hindoo Kush was part of the programme. There was to be—I quote from an article in a daily paper describing the scheme when first made public—"an unbroken iron road, 7,500 miles long, by which, with express trains travelling at 35 miles per hour, the entire journey from Calais to the City of Palaces might be accomplished in eight days." There are many reasons for rejecting or indefinitely postponing consideration of such a project in England. It is very true that the Russian has proved the best land route for our Indian telegraph; but, with telegraph wires, distances are not so important as with railways, and, in the former case, the alternative of a Mediterranean and Red Sea line has been a sufficient guarantee for the preservation of communication, until a through railway arise to supply a new line of telegraph also. I am quite sure that the inventive genius and enterprise of M. de Lesseps could speedily put before us a more tempting proposal than this, and one more likely to carry the popular sympathy and open the pockets of shareholders; but I will speak of it by and by, with others which come into the same category. Looking further back still, I find, more than five years ago—when the distinguished Russian nobleman whose recent movements between London and St. Petersburg have been so carefully watched and chronicled, was performing the same journey to and fro, with strangely similar intent and under strangely similar circumstances (though in connection with Khaiva rather than Stamboul)—a letter appeared in the *Times*, the subject of which is important to our enquiry. It was then stated that, in the archives of the *Ministre des Voies et Communications* at St. Petersburg, was a plan which had been provisionally submitted to the Imperial Government, for the construction of a railway commencing at Syd Folden Fjord, in Norway, in 67° 31' lat. north, and 15° 39' long. east of Greenwich, passing by Gellivare to Türtüla, Onega, Solikamsk, Kotschaïsk, Tobolsk, Irkutsk, Mamatchin, Pekin,

¹ I make it rather nine days; and what would be the condition of troops or individual travellers after nine days and nights uninterrupted journeying at the rate of 840 miles in the twenty-four hours?

Tientsin, to the seaboard in the Gulf of Pe-chili. From Tobolsk a line would run to Pesháwar, which is only some three-quarters of a degree more to the eastward, though very far removed in latitude; whence, to Calcutta and Bombay, respectively, the conveyance of the traveller may be already considered *un fait accompli*, though both lines are carefully particularised in the scheme. The writer of the letter under reference had been for many years Russian Vice-Consul at Shields, and having himself visited a not unimportant part of the route, was able to advance his own opinion that there was no technical hindrance to the execution of the undertaking. I am not aware that any attention was given to his remarkable statement at the time that it appeared, but it was not improbably thought more visionary than practical by the majority of those who perused it. As we are now, however, endeavouring to take in all possible ways and means of communication with India, it may be well to revert to the very words of the Vice-Consul on that occasion. He says:—"Specially constructed steamers will convey goods and passengers to and from the Norwegian coast and the United Kingdom. The gravitation system, *per se*, no novelty and infinitely less costly of construction and working than any other, is proposed to be applied to this gigantic undertaking, dispensing with the locomotive or standing engine power, the latter only exceptionally resorted to. Deep research and the most rigorous calculation show that the entire import of tea from China, of sugar, rice, and general produce from the East Indies, &c., can be effected by the proposed routes much more expeditiously and considerably under the cost by marine transport *viâ* Suez or the Cape, and *vice versâ*. European exports will follow this route. Naturally passengers will prefer land to a lengthened sea conveyance." It may be added that the writer was the reverse of an anti-Russian; he considered that the extension of Russian influence in Asia was all to the advantage of England; he was the strong advocate of an alliance between the two nations, illustrating his arguments by the assertion that Russia supplies us with more cereals than any other country, and that the increase in grain importations to our shores in 1872, and since the later development of Russian railway traffic, was to our incalculable benefit.

About ten days after date of the letter to which I have just referred, the Berlin correspondent of the *Times* extracted from the *Allgemeine Zeitung* the memorandum on an invasion of India which had been presented to the Emperor by General Duhamel at the time of the Crimean War. The details were prefaced by a statement that, according to history, nearly all the conquerors of India came from Central Asia and Persia; that the roads chosen for the purpose by Alexander, Chenghiz, Taimûr, Baber and Nadir were still available or open; and that all these roads, whether from Persia or the Oxus, converged upon Khurasan and Afghanistan. Five lines of march were then designated to Kabul, as follows: 1. From Orenburg, by the Ust-Urt, Khaiva, Marv and Bukhara; 2. From Orsk or Orenburg by Aralsk, Bukhara, Khulm and Bamian; 3. From Orsk or Troitsk, by Aralsk, Ak Masjid, Tashkand, Khokand, Khulm and Bamian: 4. From Astra-

khan by sea to Astrabad, thence by Kadushan¹ or Shamid, Mashhad, Herat and Kandahar; 5. From Julfa on the Russo-Persian frontier by Tabriz, Tehran, Mashhad, Herat and Kandahar. Why the two last should be diverted to Kabul at all is not shown, because from Kandahar there is given the direct route to India by Kwetta, Dadar and Shikarpur; as from Kabul by Jalalabad, Peshawar and Atak (called the best, shortest, and healthiest road); and from Ghazni by Derah Ismáíl Khan. I quote this project as indicative of lines of communication useful to be borne in mind, rather than with any intent of provoking discussion on the feasibility of a scheme which, so far as disclosed to the outer world, is almost ludicrously deficient in detail. But it should be observed that the Russian project does not ignore entry into India other than by the Khaibar and Bolan Passes; and there is little doubt but that invaders of India from Alexander to Mahmúd of Ghazni, and again from the ninth century downwards, did make use of other routes for purposes of entrance or exit, or both.

Later still than the reference to General Duhamel's plan of invasion to which I have alluded, a short but significant letter appeared in the *Times* on the subject of roads to India which seems to me to merit particular notice. It called attention to the fact that Persia and Afghanistan are not the only ante-chambers as it were to the Indian palace of attraction; and recalled the circumstance that a Chinese and Tibétan army, fully equipped, crossed the Himalayan mountains into Nepal at the beginning of this century and, after penetrating to the valley of Nawakot, sixteen miles only from Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, dictated a humiliating treaty to the ruling Gurkhas. The writer then proceeded to show how dangerous to India would be the appearance of an invading force in Nepal, "overhanging, as it does, "500 miles of an open frontier in the very centre of the Gangetic "valley." This Chinese invasion of a country then recently conquered by the Gorkhalis, or, as we call them, Gurkhas, a brave and warlike people, is certainly remarkable; and we know that the latter were utterly defeated. A late history of Nepal, translated into English from the original, mentions the arrival of the large army despatched from China; but asserts that it was cut to pieces by one of their own illustrious commanders, who obtained great glory from the exploit; explaining how "afterwards the Chinese Emperor, thinking it better "to live in friendship with the Gorkhalis, made peace with them."

But this is on a par with Oriental history in general. For instance, in the narrative to which I have just referred, the English war with Nepal, which begun in 1814, and ended about eighteen months later, with the gain to us of a considerable tract of territory, is dismissed in about four lines. We are told that "it broke out in the Terai, but "depriving them (the British) of wisdom, the Raja saved his country. "Then calling the British gentlemen, he made peace with them, and "allowed them to live near Thambahil."²

¹ Kabushan: but here probably Kuchan or Shahrud, i.e., the upper or lower road to Mashhad.

² History of Nepal, translated from the Parbatiya. Cambridge University Press, 1877.

We have now glanced at a number of routes which, for the traveller starting from England, necessitate an immediate and in some cases a prolonged movement to the east; the more southern course, or descent upon India, being at a comparatively late stage of the journey. It might be enquired into with advantage which of these are the more practicable for the locomotive and the rail; but I think it more profitable in a brief paper of this kind, and especially with imperfect data, to mass them in a general consideration. My own impression is that a railway to India commencing in Norway, with its northern terminus at the Syd Fiord, a grand junction at Tobolsk or Tomsk—roughly assumed as geographically convenient—and a southern terminus at Calcutta, would offer to us in some respects as great advantages as any other; and I believe that, in spite of apparent physical difficulty, a feasible road somewhere in that direction might be discovered or worked out, notwithstanding the Hindu Kush and Himalayas. But we are yet in the dark about even the preliminaries to such an undertaking rightly called “gigantic;” and this is hardly the convenient season for seeking enlightenment. I therefore propose to leave these routes to men who, like M. de Lesseps, if they do hit upon a sound and practicable project, are not likely to abandon it until success crowns their endeavours; and to ask you to think over with me something of which you may have heard before, though not perhaps in minute detail. Instead of the direct and immediate movement from England eastward, I propose to take ship, or ship and railway to Turkey. How Constantinople and the Asiatic shores of the Bosphorus are to be reached will depend upon the result of a great question at this moment under deliberation and agitating the minds of statesmen as well as obscure individuals. Let us suppose ourselves at some particular spot in the Mediterranean always available, and so situated as to place us within easy reach of the Syrian coast, or a convenient starting-point for a railway to the Persian Gulf. As an island wears an independent look, we may choose Cyprus.

I should be very glad to say what I have to say in a few words without being wearisome; but the description of places and statistics are more essential than interesting in a paper like the present. By drawing upon foreign sources, however, as well as English handbooks and English authors, I shall run less risk of repeating facts well known to my hearers, and I venture to hope the published record will be found useful, even if the spoken matter be tedious.

The geographical position of Cyprus would make it a fitting guardian of Upper Syria, Cæle-Syria, and almost of Palestine, if the island were under enlightened Government. We are told that it measures 140 miles in length from east to west, and has an area of 3,000 square miles; that two ranges of mountains stretch respectively along its northern and southern coasts; and that a fertile plain lies between them. It is said to be the Chittim of Scripture, and of the Phenicians as well as of the Hebrews; a name found in the Latin *Citium*—its chief town in the time of Cimon the Athenian, who died while besieging it in the fifth century before the Christian era. To the classical and mythological age, it was the birthplace of Venus; accord-

ing to Pliny, the seat of nine kings; in ancient history, at one time under Egyptian dominion, then Persian, then Greek, and finally Roman. In more modern days it fell into the hands of the Byzantine Greeks, and afterwards of the Saracens, from whom it was taken by Richard of England during the wars of the Crusades, to be bestowed upon Guy de Lusignan, titular King of Jerusalem. There were sixteen princes (and one princess) of the Lusignan family, who ruled in Cyprus, on the death of the last of whom, James the Third, the Venetians took possession. The latter again were dispossessed by the Turks under Sultan Selim the Second in 1570-71; and these have held the island ever since, inclusive of a ten years' interval when sovereignty was exercised by Muhammad Ali, Pasha of Egypt. On the east, according to Pliny, it once joined the continent near Syria: to the north the average breadth of the channel which separates it from Asia Minor, once the "Aulôn Cilicius," or Cilician Strait, is probably not 100 miles. The present condition of Cyprus is not hopeful; its population is said to be less than a twelfth part of the number estimated under the Venetians, or some three centuries ago; and the majority are Greeks. Its resources have, it is to be feared, greatly diminished since the Ottoman conquest; and its rich soil remains for the most part untilled and unprofitable; its forests have become less and less rich with trees; and though it can produce silks and cereals, wool, cotton, and other of the more valuable articles of commerce, and keep up an export trade with England and France, Egypt and Turkish ports, a fifth of the island only is said to be under cultivation. As for public works, the roads of the Romans and Venetians have become long since obliterated; the bridges have fallen to pieces, and goods are conveyed in miserable carts, and over almost impracticable tracks. The last Consular Report from Larnaca, dated 31st January, 1877, states:—No public works have been undertaken, and the want of bridges, roads, and jetties is becoming seriously felt. The firman which was read here about the new reforms, soon after the accession of Sultan Murad, remains a dead letter, and but little hope is placed in the working of the Constitution. The local tribunals still refuse to admit Christian evidence in cases in which Mussulmans are concerned. The vexations of the Zaptiehs in the villages for the exaction of taxes have not at all ceased, and little protection is secured to the inhabitants of the rural districts.

Cyprus is, or was recently, divided into four departments, of which three may be specially noted: on the south, Larnaca; on the east, Famagusta; and on the west, Baffa. The seaport bearing the name of the first of these is the ancient Citium: to this may be added Limasol, the great wine centre, a town of 7,000 inhabitants. I have no very full statistics of the port of Larnaca, but fifteen years ago it received 324 vessels of 54,340 tons, and sent out 321 vessels of 53,458 tons. In 1876 there were entered 457, and cleared 483 vessels of 92,926 and 91,690 tons respectively. At Limasol, in 1863, 493 vessels were entered of 32,980 tons.

Famagusta, an offshoot, if not a relic of the memorable Salamis, looks upon the Syrian coast between Latakia and Tripoli, and though

ruined and neglected, might be made, I understand, one of the best ports in the Mediterranean. It was here that the gallant Venetian Bragadino, after a defence famous in history, surrendered to the Turkish commander; and where, tradition has it, the fleet containing the choicest spoil of the island was destroyed by the act of a female captive, who found means to set fire to the vessel, on board of which, she was kept a prisoner.

The superficial extent of the present harbour is reckoned at 32 hectares (nearly 80 acres), to which a depth of 10 metres (about 33 feet or $5\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms), might readily be given; but there is only a space of 2 hectares (nearly 5 acres), which can be relied upon for the actual reception of ships. M. Collas, a French writer, experienced in Turkey and the Turks, thinks that, with ordinary engineering skill, a harbour might be formed here, covering a space of more than 60 hectares (148 acres). The plains of Famagusta and Messanieh, as well as those of Larnaca, are famed for cotton. Water is sufficient in the first. Messanieh can boast an extent of nearly half a million acres, of which perhaps not 100,000 are under cultivation. A little attention to well-irrigation would make it very productive. Baffa is the classical Paphos, celebrated for the worship of Venus, and claiming an origin from the fall of Troy. It is the chief emporium of silk in the island. This trade has, however, greatly deteriorated, and in no way represents its normal or possible condition. So with the cotton, the best and dearest in the Levant. From the 30,000 bales exported under the Venetian Government, there has been a reduction to 3,000. M. Collas thinks that the opening and ameliorating of the port of Famagusta would give an immense impetus to the export of cotton, which might be grown up to the amount of 25 to 30 millions of kilogrammes, or not far short of 30,000 tons, a high figure of productiveness.

The administrative capital Nicosia, or Lefkosa, is in the interior; but notwithstanding its old repute and prosperity under the Venetians, it has become in later years rather a centre of shops than of merchandise: that is, merchants are not resident there; for all trade is carried on through Larnaca. As to Celigne, which M. Collas makes the fourth department of the island, it should be in the north,¹ though the name is not very clearly shown in modern maps. I would add, with respect to this large and beautiful but sadly neglected Cyprus, that, independently of its magnificent position in reference to the Syrian coast, it is rich in natural resources, in agricultural products, and in classical and historical associations. Its name, and interesting particulars regarding its geography and history will be found in innumerable books, from the earliest ages of book-making to the present time. The ponderous old volumes of the 17th century, such as those of Sir Walter Raleigh, of Peter Heulin, and of Purchas have all something to say about it. And it will not be forgotten that St. Paul and St. Barnabas sailed from Seleucia on the Orontes to Cyprus, in the first century of our era.

I do not see that it is exactly talking politics to say that Cyprus in

¹ The Italian "*Cerina*," ancient *Ceryneia*, with a small bad harbour.

the hands of Great Britain would be an invaluable acquisition, and worth any amount of land which might be purchased on the coast to its east. The distance to the several ports on the mainland is not great: indeed, the island is said to be visible on a clear day from Selencia. A railway terminus for the Persian-Gulf-line might be reached in a very few hours, and fair-weather boats calculated to carry over a thousand passengers—troops or civilians—might be used at certain times at an inconsiderable cost. But let us now pause to consider which of the many lines proposed should be chosen for the railway.

Of the routes discussed before the Committee which sat on the Euphrates Valley Railway in 1872, five were selected as the most important, they were :—

1st. A line starting from Alexandretta or Suedia, near the mouth of the Orontes, passing through Aleppo to the Euphrates, at or near Jabah Castle, and thence carried down the right bank of the river to Kuwait, on the western side of the Persian Gulf.

2nd. A line starting from one of the same points, crossing the Euphrates at Belis, passing down the left bank of the river, or the right bank of the Tigris, to a point nearly opposite Baghdad, re-crossing the Euphrates, and proceeding to Kuwait.

3rd. A line starting as before, crossing the Euphrates at Bir, thence going round to Orfah and Diarbekir, and following the right bank of the Tigris as the last.

4th. A similar line, only following the left bank of the Tigris.

5th. A line starting from Tripoli, and proceeding across the desert, by way of Damascus and Palmyra, to the Euphrates, whence it might follow one of the preceding routes.

Since the date of the Committee's report, the late Mr. W. A. Brooks, a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, proposed a line of railway starting from the island of Ruad, crossing the Orontes near the town of Homs, passing through Palmyra and the confines of the Syrian desert, and finding its way to Kuwait in the Persian Gulf by the right bank of the Euphrates.

It will be observed that here are six projects, but that the first four have the same doubtful starting-point—Alexandretta or Suedia. Of the remaining two, the one begins its course at Tripoli, the other at Ruad, between which places there is a distance of, it may be, half a degree by sea, and something more by land. To me it does not seem material whether we take the one or the other of the six routes, so far as the main object is concerned—or simply to effect railway communication. I believe that, in this respect, the end could be achieved by British energy and engineering in any case. But I do think it important to consider the question of distance; and sanitary precautions are perhaps quite as essential to success as the choice of a line practicable to engineers. The possession of Cyprus would facilitate selection of a terminus; for with such resources as are there available we could only require on the mainland a landing-place, offices, sheds for temporary accommodation of troops, and residence for a small railway staff provided from head-quarters in the island. Without presuming

to set aside the many arguments put forward on behalf of other localities, I at once declare myself in favour of commencing work at Tripoli or Tyre; otherwise of reviving the suggestions of Captain Burton—certainly not the least competent judge among the score and a half of competent witnesses examined by the Select Committee on the Euphrates Valley Railway.

Now, if we are going to run a line through the so-called Syrian desert, we cannot well avoid Palmyra, and here we reach at once a main station in an old acknowledged line of communication between east and west. Whether it was included in the great road passing from Tangiers to India and China I feel uncertain; because the mention of Kufa, between Damascus and Baghdad, as one of the halting-places, leads to the influence of a lower route; but I daresay that it was, and I shall revert to this long line of traffic by and by as having a direct bearing on the subject of present discussion. In any case let us not suppose that in penetrating this resort of Bedouins we have advanced into an unknown region. To the best of my belief I have myself met with more than one European who has accomplished the journey across it when passing from Baghdad to Bairut; and I cannot but wonder that no such experienced traveller was examined before the Select Committee. For about 600 years Palmyra shared more or less with Alexandria the proud distinction of being an acknowledged centre of western traffic with the east. If it be the Tadmor of King Solomon, as generally supposed, it had at the dawn of that period already existed for six and a half centuries. From 331 years before the Christian era, when the Persians succumbed to the Greeks, to A.D. 275, when Zenobia was defeated by Aurelian, Palmyra was a noted city to traders from the Persian Gulf as from the Mediterranean—brought eventually into the Roman commercial system under the Emperors Trajan and Adrian. As it was not, however, a port, it doubtless received its Indian goods through the medium of Arabs. Mr. Priaulx, in his "Travels of Apollonius of Tyana," speaks of it as "pre-eminently an inland town," and "situated in the desert "some eighty miles from the Euphrates." He does not think that it could have had any direct intercourse with India:—"Its citizens "and resident strangers were merchants, warehousemen, carriers, "agents, but they assuredly were not seafaring men; they possessed "no ships, and received the produce of India through the Arabs, "whose vessels delivered it at Sura or Thapsacus on the Eu- "phrates, whence it was brought on camels to Palmyra." The two cities named appear to me to represent, one a point high on the river near Mr. Andrew's Jabah Castle or Belis, and the other a point low down towards the site of ancient Babylon. But Mr. Priaulx also says that, if the Arab or other vessels bringing the produce of India up the Persian Gulf did not themselves ascend the Euphrates, "at Teredon they discharged their cargoes intended for "Vologesia, which was reached either by land on camels, or in "vessels of lighter draught by the river." The time taken up in the journey he is unable to conjecture; but he puts the distance at nearly 250 miles. "At Vologesia," he writes, "a two days' journey from their

"city, the merchants of Palmyra took up the trade. In its market or fair, held always at some little distance from the town itself, they met the Arab and Indian traders, and exchanged with them by sale and purchase the manufactures of the west for the goods and produce of India." Now in "Peter Heulin," an edition of 1652, I find that Balsora (our Basrah), the port town to Babylon, is supposed to be the city of Teredon, mentioned by Ptolemy; and that Vologesia is placed by Ptolemy among the cities of Chaldea, but by Marcellinus in Assyria. Kiepert's "Imperium Romanum" map shows it to be in the former locality and near Babylon; but by the two days' distance from Palmyra, Mr. Prianlx must evidently suppose it higher up the river. It has been a learned question whether certain ambassadors coming from India to Augustus passed through Palmyra; and the argument used against the likelihood of the route was the statement that owing to the length of the journey several of the dignitaries died on the road—a circumstance which was hardly credible for so short a journey, and so direct a route.

Captain Burton gives the direction and distance of two routes to Palmyra from his own knowledge; that is to say from his own knowledge, inasmuch as he had been to Palmyra—though he was not asked the important question by what route he had gone or returned. Than this renowned city no place seems more fitting to be a station on the line of railway from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. It is only 144 direct geographical miles from Tyre, or 158 from Tripoli, and "is in the first overland route which was made to the Euphrates; it is as old as the days of David and Solomon."

Perhaps the main objection to Captain Burton's proposal in favour of Tripoli is contained in the answer of Captain Felix Jones to the questions put to him in a second recall before the Committee. "Tripoli," he states, "is no port, and is as hot and unsalubrious as Alexandretta itself. Secondly, between it and Palmyra the double ranges of mountains, Lebanon and anti-Lebanon, offer obstacles no less formidable to surmount with rails than the passage of the Bolan Pass; thirdly, the route is both indirect and more distant from all points *d'appui*; it is more in the true desert, and therefore more liable to greater risks."² But the risks are afterwards explained away as comparative, and the climate of Alexandretta is admitted to be "a little more unhealthy than the others." Whereas, on the physical difficulties of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, I turn to the pamphlet which Mr. Brooks published under the title of "Euphrates: the Road to the East." This gentleman says, "The line of railway proposed by me from the Syrian shore, abreast of the island of Aradus (Ruad) to the Bay of Kuwait in the Persian Gulf, will have a length of only 850 miles, and will certainly be 100 miles shorter than from any other proposed western port except that of Tripoli;" regarding which, he adds, a few pages further on: "Though I might damage this rival scheme by referring, as others have done, solely to the great altitude

¹ Parliamentary Report on Euphrates Valley Railway, pp. 130-135.

² *Ibid.*, p. 151.

" of the Lebanon range in the neighbourhood, I think it fairer to
 " at once acknowledge that, although at a greater cost, the same pass
 " through the mountains, which I have availed myself of for the road
 " from Aradus, is apparently also quite accessible from Tripoli, and,
 " therefore Aradus and Tripoli stand upon their own competitive
 " advantages as harbour or naval stations." The pass mentioned is
 that called *Wádi Khálid*, and it seems to me therefore that if a land-
 ing-place were available between Aradus and Tripoli, that would be
 the best and most convenient point for a railway terminus. Fama-
 gusta would be the opposite port in the island of Cyprus, although
 Larnaca, if preferred, would doubtless answer equally well as regards
 geographical position. If there be no intermediate spot suitable to the
 purpose, then let those acquainted with the localities choose between
 Ruad and Tripoli; but there would be no need of preparation at either
 for the shelter of line-of-battle ships, as readily provided by the
 natural advantages of Ruad.

I shall presently have to make one short quotation from the
 Report of the Select Committee to show the favourable opinion
 entertained of the Euphrates Valley Railway in respect of British
 interests. It is perhaps only fair to repeat the passages by which
 that opinion is immediately preceded:—

" The principal argument in favour of Alexandretta is, that it
 " possesses a fine natural harbour. The objections taken to it are—
 " first, that it is an unhealthy place; and, secondly, that a railway
 " starting from it would have to be carried across more difficult country
 " than would be encountered on a line from Suedia up the valley of
 " the Orontes. Suedia, it is said, is far more healthy than Alexan-
 " dretta; but, on the other hand, there is no port there, and should it
 " be chosen as the terminus, great expense must be incurred in making
 " one. The advocates of Alexandretta contend that its unhealthiness,
 " even at present, is much exaggerated; and, further, that a much less
 " expenditure than would be required to make a port of Suedia would
 " be sufficient to drain the marshes, which are the principal cause of
 " the insalubrity of Alexandretta. It has also been shown by recent
 " engineering evidence that there would be no difficulty which could
 " not be readily overcome in the line between Alexandretta and Aleppo,
 " and that it would be even preferable to the line of the Orontes. Your
 " Committee have not the means of forming a decided judgment on
 " these controverted points, and are of opinion that should a railway be
 " undertaken, it would be desirable that the relative advantages of
 " these two Mediterranean termini should be carefully investigated by
 " a competent commission.

" With regard to the third port which has been mentioned, namely,
 " Tripoli, your Committee would refer to the evidence given in its
 " favour by Captain Burton, which is not, however, supported by that
 " of the other witnesses whom they have examined. So far as the
 " information they have obtained goes, they are disposed to prefer
 " Alexandretta to Tripoli as the point of departure, even for a line
 " down the right bank of the Euphrates; while, should a line down
 " the Tigris be preferred, or should it be thought desirable to connect

"the new line with the projected Turkish system, there can be no doubt of the superiority of the former terminus.

"As regards the terminus on the Persian Gulf, your Committee are decidedly of opinion that it would be better to carry the line to some point where it might be brought into communication with the steam vessels which are now under Government subvention to carry the mails, and which ply from the Indian ports to Bussorah, than to continue it along the coast to Kurrachee, by a very expensive and probably unremunerative route. Of the particular ports which have been mentioned, they are inclined to prefer the port of Grane; but upon this point, as well as upon the selection of a port on the Mediterranean, they think that a local inquiry, conducted by competent scientific authorities, with a special reference to the purpose in view, would be desirable.

"Passing from the question of the termini to that of the route itself, your Committee find that the arguments in favour of, and against, the Euphrates and the Tigris routes respectively, may be thus stated:—

"The Euphrates route is considerably the shorter, would be the cheaper to make; and, assuming an equal rate of speed, would afford the quicker passage for persons, troops, or mails passing between England and India. The Tigris route might attract the larger amount of traffic, and would connect itself better with the projected Turkish system."

It will be observed that in selecting Tripoli for the point of departure, I am only differing from the Committee in a *disposition* to prefer Alexandretta, so far as the information they had obtained enabled them to form an opinion. In carrying on this preliminary line to Kuwait, I am strictly following the course they were inclined to prefer; and in pronouncing in favour of the Euphrates route, I am advocating that which they have stated to be the shorter, cheaper, and more expeditious. Mr. Brooks has strengthened the case in favour of Tripoli, by the additional evidence of his pamphlet, published since the sitting of the Select Committee, because his proposal to select Ruad as a railway terminus on the shores of the Mediterranean, is tantamount to an approval of the desert line from Tripoli.

Fully persuaded then that there is no valid objection, moral or physical, to the construction of a line of railway through the Palmyra desert to a convenient point on the Euphrates, and thence to the Persian Gulf; and believing that the said line has been sufficiently studied in practice to make the only material subject of deliberation its Mediterranean terminus, I will put as a not absurd hypothesis, that we inaugurate our operations for urgent overland communication with India by establishing a *depôt*, for men and materials both, at the island of Cyprus. This done, we commence work simultaneously for an eastward as for a westward line; the first, whether at Ruad or Tripoli, or other point easily reached from Famagusta or Larnaca, to be continued for 850 miles to Kuwait, on the Persian Gulf; the second, at Karachi, to be carried along the Makran coast to Jashk, or a more convenient spot in the vicinity—roughly 500 miles by map measure—

ment, but nearer 700 by the telegraph route. These two completed, there would only remain the distance from Kuwait to Jashk, for which specially organized transports might be requisite. I do not consider it romancing to say that the voyage from Cyprus to Karachi might in this way be accomplished within a week, allowing a day and a half for embarkation and disembarkation. For instance let us reckon :—

Road or Tripoli, to Kuwait, 850 miles at 25 miles an hour,	
say.....	36 hours
Kuwait to Jashk, 600 miles by steamer, say	60 „
Jashk to Karachi, 700 miles at 25 miles an hour	30 „
	126
Allowed for delays	30
	156 „

or six days and a half.

Now I know that it may be said, “ Why disembark troops at all at “ Jashk, whence the sea distance to Karachi would enable them to reach “ that port in twenty-four hours later than by train; or only twelve hours, “ allowing for delay in disembarkation ? ” To this I reply that twelve hours is an important gain in time, when the occasion is an emergency ; and that the delays in disembarkation would in some way be counter-balanced by the lesser inconvenience of getting men and baggage from trains to barracks than from transports in the harbour. And I further reply that the whole arrangement is only proposed as a primary step ; because the two sections of railway I advocate as an urgent measure, to be accomplished as early as practicable, are really but parts of a grand whole line of communication which *must* at some future period be made to connect east and west. The point at which the Euphrates is touched from Palmyra should eventually be a junction for lines from Scutari ; and who can say how many other quarters ; and again between that point and Kuwait, a line should strike off to the eastward, which, passing through Persia, should join the Perso-Baluch line at Jashk or in the vicinity.

Of such a line it had been my intention to have traced out the actual course ; but I fail, or at all events withhold a plan, from want of fuller data on the Kurdistan passes ; and it seem to me that the through line must be a remote even though a sure achievement. Any line leading to Ispahan would have an immense advantage in the fact that from that city eastward all is plain sailing up to the mountains below Karman ; whence my impression is, from more than one journey in the neighbouring districts, that there would be no great difficulties in selecting a means of passage to the Makran coast. But Ispahan is far north ; and Baghdad, Shustar, Shiraz, and Lar, seem to indicate a more direct communication with Karachi, and therefore a fitter supplement to the Euphrates Valley rails. Were it not for the comparative unprofitableness of the northern shores of the Persian Gulf, I should advocate the actual coast line as others have done before me ;

but there is just enough indecision on the subject to render advisable a pause which might result in bringing into the system an important town such as Shiraz, and penetrating the tracts between that place and Bandar Abbas by a more direct and shorter route than that of the sea coast. Mr. Gifford Palgrave tells the Committee that he has "landed at every little port, or possible place, along the whole length "of that coast from Jashk to Bushire;" that "it is thinly peopled "but by no means desolate, or destitute of inhabitants; is well supplied with water;" and that "the mountains which line it, although "not far from the sea, yet in hardly any case come down actually upon "the sea, but leave a plain of various breadths, sometimes as much as "twenty miles, sometimes less, which plain is perfectly well inhabited "and well supplied with everything necessary to life."

Captain Felix Jones, on the other hand, does not consider Mr. Palgrave's view the right one, because his subject is clearly not regarded with the practical eye of a surveyor, but after the manner of a passing traveller without practical knowledge. He admits, however, that a railway along the coast might develop the traffic to a small extent, and he says nothing of physical difficulty. The question, however, is one for a further Commission to investigate and decide. In the meanwhile I see in Mr. Ainsworth's map of 1872, which illustrates the "proposed railway routes in Western Asia," and in Mr. Dawes' scheme for utilizing the River Kúrún, matter for very serious consideration. In connection with the latter, Mr. Mackenzie's account of the road from Shustar to Ispahan is a useful paper, although the conclusion at which he arrives, that the said road would not be found "so difficult "or expensive for a railway as either that from Resht to Tehran, or "Bushire to Shiraz" is not thoroughly cheering. For the country between Resht and Tehran, and especially Bushahr and Shiraz, is one of mountains, passes, and ravines; of high tracts not to be attained, and of low tracts to be sedulously avoided. The main feature of the present argument is, however, that a comparatively direct line from the Mediterranean to India is feasible; and that once having spanned the Palmyra desert, and descended the Euphrates, the nearer we keep it to the sea coast the better for our general and regardless-of-expense purpose. I spoke of an old line of traffic from Tangiers to China: that line passed from the Euphrates to Basrah, Ahwaz, Fars, Karman, and Sind, on its almost interminable way. I am inclined to think that, in Baluchistan, it took the old road of Minab, the Fauoch Pass, Binh, Gaih, and Kej to Baila.

Many of the places to which I have referred I know from personal experience. Jashk is one. It was a dreary spot when first contemplated as a telegraph station in 1862, and actually selected for the purpose in 1868; but it has of late years improved. Lieutenant Stiffe, Indian Navy, in his "Supplement to the Persian Gulf Pilot," published by order of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, says:—

"Jashk Bay was the rendezvous of the English ships trading to

¹ Minutes of Evidence taken before Select Committee on Euphrates Valley Railway, p. 21.

' Persia before the Portuguese were dispossessed of Hormuz. . . .
 ' A small village has sprung up since the establishment of the telegraph station, and a few supplies can be got, such as sheep, fowls, a few vegetables, and various articles used by Europeans, but not in large quantities. . . . There is a little rocky point in Jashk Bay, . . . where there is a good landing, only a quarter of a mile north of the telegraph office. . . . The anchorage in Jashk East Bay is good during a *shamal*; but in a winter easterly gale it would be quite exposed. . . . A convenient anchorage for a vessel, not drawing more than 15 or 16 feet, is half a mile off shore. . . . A large vessel must anchor north-north-west. . . . A sailing vessel in December and March should be able to weigh, and moor round the point, if a heavy north-wester set in, of which she could get warning by telegraph from Henjam."

Here I should explain that Henjam is an island, of about 5 miles in length and $2\frac{1}{2}$ broad, about 120 miles north-west of Jashk, and immediately south of the large island of Kishm, from which the channel which separates it is in one place only a mile broad, well situated as a rendezvous for vessels passing up and down the Persian Gulf; it was made one of our telegraph stations in 1869, when the cable was transferred to the Persian shores of the Gulf from the opposite coast at Ras Masandom. There is good shelter for ships there; and the place has certain advantages over Bassadore (or more properly Bassiduh), the old coaling station so familiar to the Indian Navy.

Though not entirely agreeing in the views put forward by the promoters of the old Euphrates Valley Railway project, I think that the reasoning was in the main sound, and the arguments brought forward enough to convince Government, as they did the Select Committee, that "if the enterprise were to be regarded simply as one affecting British interests, it would be the wisest course to adopt the shortest and most direct line not open to very obvious objections, and that one of the two routes by the way of the Euphrates should be preferred." And now I may venture to touch upon the practical uses of the line already stated, but more than ever demonstrated by the occurrences of the last few years—otherwise of the interval between the last deputation on Mr. Andrew's proposal and the present time.

It was, perhaps, rash on my part to give a title to this paper so comprehensive as to include a state of things which might, almost equally and at the same time, affect two lines of Anglo-Indian communication so close together as those of the Euphrates Valley and Suez Canal. But this is really the great contingency of all, and unfortunately "possible." The long sea route is a very long one, whether we take into consideration the Isthmus of Panama with the Malay Straits, or restore to the Cape of Good Hope its old undivided glory. There, however, they are; and, though I commenced proceedings by putting them aside and am not going to dwell upon them now, I cannot but acknowledge their presence and "possible" uses, and feel thankful that we possess them as a *dernier ressort*. But let us, for an instant, look into these possible "contingencies" that would shut up both the Euphrates route and Suez Canal.

In the evidence before the Select Committee in 1872, I observe questions put to Captain Tyler as to the probable result of a Russo-Egyptian and Russo-Persian combination against us, the former on the Suez and the latter on the Euphrates Valley lines of communication. The reply is that "if Russia and Persia were to combine, then "the Euphrates Valley would be more exposed; if Russia and Egypt "were to combine, then the Suez route would be more exposed." I see a more dangerous combination than either, which might affect both routes simultaneously, that is, a Russo-Turkish one. Hence the necessity of striking while the iron is hot, or immediately securing a line by Treaty with the Sultan, which should be, to all intents and purposes, British; protected by a material force on the coast—not a ship or two, with a guard of marines, but an island, with garrison as well as depôt—and the eastern terminus of which could be reached in 90 hours from India, but in much less time from the entrance to the Persian Gulf. The shortness and directness of this line, constructed with English money, would be the truest guarantee of its intent and purpose—that it is, in fact, a mere link with India—and its original unprofitableness, in a money point of view, should prove that it is not designed to draw out the riches of the country, and direct them to the benefit of aliens. Eventually, if its example caused the formation of branch native lines, and such junction produced a golden harvest for parties concerned, the profit to England would have been legitimately acquired. I should be very glad to think a practical notion of this kind could find place among the minor considerations of the great Congress now sitting. For, if peace follow the present negotiations, which is at least probable, my humble opinion is that no time should be lost in carrying out some such end as that contemplated in the provision of a railway, which I rather call "Palmyrene" than "Euphrates Valley," whether its existence be provided for by payment, or in compensation for claims, or as part of an Anglo-Ottoman scheme of mutual benefit. If peace be lasting—a consummation devoutly to be wished—then would the establishment of the railway inevitably tend to the civilization and material good of a region too long neglected, and second to none on the face of the earth in interesting associations.

Supposing it were not Russia, but another chance ally of Turkey or Egypt, or of both together, which threatened our communication by Suez or Palmyra, and that the chapter of accidents contained an account of our failure to counteract the hostile combination. In such case we should have played our cards very badly to be shut out from the vast field of proposed communication with India, to which I have already adverted in describing the several northern projects. For I am fully convinced that some years hence, if none of these sketched-out lines actually join our Indian system, there will be no very long link left to complete, in at least one or two of the number.

I must apologize for putting before you a paper which want of time has compelled me to complete in a form less methodical than the importance of the subject demands. Those present who are agreed with me in the propriety of giving attention to an alternative Indian line to

that through Egypt, will greatly aid the cause advocated, by making practical suggestions on the description of carriage and railway gauge, and in the steam transports which appear most suitable to meet the requirements contemplated.

MR. W. GIFFORD PALGRAVE: Speaking with all possible deference to the practised authority whose paper we have just heard, and in whose views I have the pleasure of entirely and thoroughly concurring, as far as the importance of the line is concerned, and as far as the advisability of making Cyprus, in a certain measure, the starting point of that line, I have only noticed one slight point in which I would venture to differ, as far as my personal experience of those countries goes, from Sir Frederic Goldsmid's case, namely, from the exact starting of the line from either Tripoli or Tyre, and conducting it through Palmyra. I myself visited Palmyra about the year 1861, and I went to it from the town of Hamah, which is about two days' horse-journey south of Aleppo, and I came back by the town of Homs, which lies somewhat further to the south. To both those places—Homs and Hamah—the starting point would not be from Beyrout or Tripoli itself, where the line of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon might be turned, and which would necessitate a great circle of route, but rather from the island of Ruad. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be any decent anchorage or any sufficiently sheltered place where vessels of any considerable size for transport could be made use of at that particular point of the coast. I have visited the island of Ruad. I went from Tripoli, and I think, on horseback, it took me fourteen or fifteen hours to get opposite to the island of Ruad, which was in sight of the shore. I do not remember having observed that there was any available point for an extensive landing point in that part. I think in that history will confirm me, as it makes no mention of that island ever having been used as a shelter or harbour for any anchorage. However, that would be the point to reach Palmyra. But I venture to hold the opinion which I gave several years ago, when I had the honour of being called before the Select Committee in 1872, that the proper landing point, and the one most in agreement with the proposed idea of Cyprus, would be Eskenderoon or Alexandretta. The first reason is that there would be a good harbour, which, with very little trouble, could be made into an excellent one, and possess the additional advantage of being unique, because it is well known that Jaffa is a wretched roadstead and Beyrout is not much better. The objection to it as a landing point is its unhealthiness. I admit that down on the coast, and where there is a large trading station which bears the name of Alexandra, there is a great deal of marshy intermittent fever; but I know, from residence there, that houses are placed on a little range of hills at a height of from 1,500 to 1,600 feet above the sea. This harbour of Eskenderoon resembles the harbour of Kingston, Jamaica, where the troops were: there was an amount of yellow fever, and so on, everywhere; whereas, on the contrary, when the station has been removed to the neighbouring camps of Up-Park and Newcastle, close to the harbour itself, the troops were as healthy as they could be in any station in England; consequently, I think the objection of the unhealthiness of Eskenderoon arises from the total want of attention on the part of the Government that at present occupies that part, to its present sanitary conditions. With very little difficulty a perfectly healthy spot might be selected, namely, at the hills of Beyland, immediately behind Eskenderoon, where, at a distance of an hour and a half from the landing place, the troops could be quartered in the most healthy manner possible, alongside the line, and be able to make use of it immediately. Secondly, the communications from Alexandretta and Eskenderoon to the Euphrates Valley are the best; all of them are those that are most used by the inhabitants of the country at the present day. It is observable, with reference to Palmyra, that the communications are very difficult indeed, not on account of the Arab or Bedouin tribes with whom, as Sir Frederic Goldsmid remarks, there would be no difficulty to make an arrangement; but from the want of water between the last station on the Syrian side and Palmyra, a distance of sixteen hours on horseback, there is not a drop of water at hand, and you are obliged to carry it with you. Starting from the other side of Palmyra the same difficulty exists. Water is found only in scarce

quantities and at great distances, and I do not think artesian wells could remedy that in time. The favourite route at the present moment, and which, according to Eastern history, has been the route ever since the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire, is that which, passing from Eskenderoon, passes over the Beilan Pass to Aleppo at a very small height. I have been over the line on horseback, and in no point has the line I believe to pass over a height of about 1,200 feet above the sea. It would reach from Aleppo through the pass down to Rakkah upon the Euphrates a little to the north-east of Palmyra or Tadmor, and then follow the line of the Euphrates. When we talk of conveying any large number of men for considerable distances, it might be under circumstances when there was very great heat, and a copious supply of water along the route is an important matter in order to contribute not only to the comfort but to the safety and the life of the troops, who would fare as badly as the unfortunate ambassadors mentioned by Sir Frederic, many of whom it seems died on the way. Therefore from these two motives, namely, that of a good starting point—and, I venture to say, a perfectly healthy starting point with very slight precautions—with the advantage of water along the whole route and with no engineering difficulties on the way such as high and difficult ranges, of course I would recommend the route from Eskenderoon by Aleppo down to Rakkah, and so along the line of the Euphrates, and from Rakkah southward. This would very nearly coincide with the Palmyra route. From observation I should say that that line would exceed the other line in length about 100 miles. On the other hand it would shorten the distance in this way, that Eskenderoon is much nearer to Cyprus than Ruad, and although the land route would be lengthened about 100 miles, the sea route would be shortened about forty or fifty; so, setting the one against the other, it is really, in so great a distance, hardly a point of importance. On that only point do I venture to differ from the very able lecture we have heard delivered. There is one point I would notice with regard to the northern coast of the Persian Gulf. That coast I did rather against my will in a small boat, touching the coast at every point; and I still maintain what I before stated, that as far as the engineering difficulties are concerned there are absolutely none. In taking a line from Bushire right as far as Jashk, the high promontory belongs to the other side. On the Persian side there is a range of mountains beginning south of Bunder Abbas and rising in height to the east. The spurs which come down to the sea coast, if any, are extremely small; at the same time I also concur with Sir Frederic Goldsmid in thinking for the moment that sea conveyance would be the most desirable. I would add one point about the harbour of Koweyt, which I visited and which is far to be preferred when the scheme comes up for consideration. It is certainly the most desirable. The population of that part of Arabia are, without exception, what we should call the most civilised of any whom I have come across. It has a very good harbour, and the population are the most civilised I have come across in the way of understanding the advantages of commerce and navigation, and consequently a certain amount of local assistance might be expected from them. From there would be a good starting point to beyond Jashk as far as I can judge from my own experience and the experience of others.

Mr. HADDAN, C.E.: I was late Engineer-in-Chief to the Turkish Government. The province which I had under my charge for eight years was bounded on the north by Aleppo and on the south by Jerusalem; and I think I can therefore give you a little information on the subject of the Overland Railway to India. I am sure you all will agree with me that Sir F. Goldsmid's suggestion of the Island of Cyprus, as an outpost, is a golden one, for you will see that it is quite as easy to get to it by water as it is to Constantinople, the proposed terminus of the Austrian State Railway; or rather, I should say, it is quite as near, and decidedly much easier. The line from Vienna to Constantinople would have to pass through Bosnia, in which country there is not a flat ten-acre field to be found; so that I think the question of a through European line may for some ten or twelve years be decidedly thrown on one side, and Constantinople be ignored. The only chance, therefore, we have in our time of getting to India by rail is decidedly from the Mediterranean. With all due deference to Mr. Palgrave, I may mention that the Beilan Pass is so close to Alexandretta that you cannot climb it by an ordinary railway. It is 2,200 feet above the sea-level, and at a distance of only 14 miles from the coast the gradients for a

railway would be 1 in 12, so that it would be another failure like the Mont Cenis, and without the ready-made road either. The question of the insalubrity of Alexandretta has been much exaggerated. During my period of office there I was instructed to drain the marshes. The whole thing could be done for 3,000*l.*, which is a mere bagatelle. My plans were published in the Blue Book on the Euphrates Valley Railway. In fact, it is not a marsh at all, the bottom being sand; but the sea, beating into the bay, has formed a sand ridge all along the littoral, which prevents the fresh water escaping into the sea; moss and all sorts of vegetation has sprung up, and the fresh water not being allowed to run off, a very undesirable smell arises from the putrefaction of the moisture. All along the coast from Alexandretta to Suez, there is no port or harbour at all, except Alexandretta. The apology for a quay is situated close to the town, and on the east side of Alexandretta Bay; but there is a fine natural harbour on the left-hand side of the bay, at Ayas. Starting from Ayas, after the Plain of Issus is traversed, you can commence to rise many miles sooner than when starting from Alexandretta itself; you may thus get over the Beilan Pass, and you also settle the question of insalubrity. The port of Seleucia or Suedia has been suggested, because there is no pass to get over, but there is no harbour, and the river has to be crossed seventeen times in running up the valley. And, moreover, between Seleucia and Alexandretta there is a famous point which is called Ras-el-Hanzir or the "Pig's Head," which is quite impassable even for foot passengers; so that it would be impossible to join this line to Europe. This is one of the main arguments in favour of Alexandretta as against Suedia, Tripoli, Tyre, and all the southern ports, and is the reason why the preference is given to Alexandretta in a commercial point of view. But I fancy Sir F. Goldsmid was not proposing the Palmyrene trace as a commercial speculation but merely a military line, and there is no objection, provided arrangements be made to join the European main line route at Aleppo, or some point even further inland, say Mardin. If we study all the Lebanon passes from Alexandretta south, you will find (1) Suedia, the outlet of the Orontes; (2) Tripoli, which is only 700 feet high; (3) Tyre, which is the natural outlet of the country, there being no pass since the Leontes debouches there. Beyrout is out of the question, as the road to Damascus passes the Lebanon range at over 3,000 feet elevation: it might have been turned, however, *via* Sidon. The learned lecturer referred to Baron Reuter's expedition to Teheran. The Shah of Persia was most anxious to have the work done under his own eye, and as he would not trouble to go to the Caspian end of the line, he insisted on the line being commenced at Teheran. The cost of the rails, owing to transport difficulties, I was informed by the engineer in charge of the line, reached such a point that they might have been made in silver on the spot. With reference to the Suez Canal, I saw a letter in the *Times* a week ago, signed by MacKillop Pasha, in which he states that he has provided such powerful dredging machines in the event of a steamer or vessel being sunk in the Canal, that he could cut a fresh channel in a week. There is one very bad place I may mention, near Ismaila, where such an operation would be out of the question: it is a rock cutting—the Suez Canal is not all sand, by any means. This cutting is something like 70 feet deep, and it is, in addition, situated on a very sharp curve. Now, if any political accident happened to a vessel in the Suez Canal, it is quite certain that it would occur at this point; so that the route to India by the Suez Canal might be perfectly blocked at any moment and in the simplest manner possible. The Egyptian Railway would not mend the matter, for there would be no reserve shipping at Suez. You may wonder why one could not make a line from Alexandretta to Meskinah, a town near Aleppo on the Euphrates, and thence adopt river transport. It is only about ten hours from Aleppo, or 180 miles from Alexandretta; but the Euphrates, as also the Tigris, are very tortuous and sluggish, and full of shoals. The height of the river at Meskinah is only 600 feet above the Persian Gulf, so the fall is not enough to cut a straight channel, and the consequent detours are so overwhelming that after hours you will come back almost to the spot where you started from. There are also weirs erected all along the river for irrigation purposes, the cost of buying up which precludes all idea of making the river navigable. Midhat Pasha, my chief, cut openings through the weirs and made them into rapids. It nevertheless took nineteen days to get from Baghdad to Meskinah. We had to stop at night and also frequently in the day

to cut fuel, &c., and in bad places we ran into sandbanks every five minutes. These seem trifles now when you are not in their midst, but on such an important route, such tedious and irksome delays would be fatal. The city of Aleppo is about 1,100 feet above the level of the sea, and the line from Alexandretta, viz., Aleppo to the Euphrates, has nothing more to recommend it over the Palmyrene line except that most important point Mr. Palgrave mentioned to you, viz., the question of water, which is a most important one; but for a strategical line I believe Captain Burton's proposed line from Tyre is the most feasible. It has been surveyed by the Turkish Government, and water borings were attended in every case with success. The importance of this matter with reference to the road to India has not, I may mention, been overlooked by Russia. Seven years ago they appointed a Consul to Aleppo, whom I knew intimately; and, without breaking confidence in any way, I may mention that this gentleman's whole business was to find out all he could about the Euphrates Valley Railway, and to place every possible obstacle in the way of its realisation. The English Consul at Aleppo mentions an obstacle to railway construction in those countries which, until I designed the Pioneer Railway some ten years ago, I myself found an insuperable one, and that is the question of labour. If you are going to make a railway of something like a thousand miles long, where are you to find the arms and the legs to make it with? In an agricultural country, especially after a war or famine, every man is better employed tilling the ground than in making unprofitable earthworks. In addition, a country like Turkey, where nearly the whole of the revenue is derived from agriculture, would certainly—the Consul thinks—be ruined during the six or seven years; the bone and sinew of the Empire were doing the English Government's work instead of their own. I have studied this difficulty as an engineer, and have succeeded in devising a system of railway which has no earthworks. It was described *in extenso* in this hall some ten days since, and can be executed at the rate of six miles a day with only 100 workmen per mile (foreigners). Being constructed entire in the workshop, its progress is unlimited, so that it could be laid down, not only from Alexandretta to the Persian Gulf, but, if you like, all the way to India in less than two years' time; and not require some twenty or thirty years before a steam communication could be accomplished in the usual manner. The Peninsular and Oriental mail subvention would suffice to guarantee the dividend of the "Pioneer," which, after supplying reliable statistics of traffic, &c., would make way for its successor, greatly aid its construction, and then be broken up into branches to feed the main line.

Lieutenant-General Sir ARNOLD KEMBALL: I think that if the intention, regardless of expense, were merely to connect the Mediterranean with the Persian Gulf, there would be no objection to the line proposed by General Goldemid save in the physical obstructions pointed out by Mr. Palgrave; but the main objection is that it would not pay. Commercially it could not supersede the Suez Canal as a highway for ships from sea to sea without breaking bulk; and in the event of a Russo-Egyptian or Russo-Turkish combination Englishmen should more properly direct their attention to maintain their communications through Egypt and secure their position there, than to protect a railway extending for a thousand miles over a waterless desert through an enemy's country. For the transport of troops I believe that the necessity for repeated transshipment would render the gain in time very insignificant, and would bar the use of this line as a commercial highway. Moreover, if we were involved in a conflict with Russia on account of Turkey, this line would lie out of the region of strategical operations in that country.

My contention is that both for military and commercial purposes a grand trunk line from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf, with a branch from Alexandretta to Mosul or thereabouts, would be more advantageous to our interests; it would attract the traffic of the country through which it passed, and probably be remunerative over every section, whereas the proposed line would be devoid of any local traffic, and would merely furnish a means of communication between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf *en route* to India, much inferior, in my opinion, to that already existing through Egypt. Even as a means of direct communication from sea to sea, I should still prefer a line from Alexandretta to the Tigris, and thence *via* Baghdad to the Persian Gulf.

Kowcyt possesses many advantages as the terminus of such a line, but it could

be hardly included in the larger railway scheme to India, as involving a *détour* from that port round the head of the Persian Gulf to meet the proposed line from Kurrachee. The junction of this line must more conveniently be effected by a branch from Baghdad *via* Howzeih.

Sir FREDERIC GOLDSMID: Perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words as to what has fallen from Sir Arnold Kemball and Mr. Palgrave. I am quite aware that commercial considerations do not recommend the line that has been traced. I proposed it rather as one intended to meet an exigency, and which might be constructed in a very short time. With regard to the provision of water, it seems to me that the object contemplated would be worth the expense and trouble of wells. With regard to labour, I have no doubt there would be difficulty; but my opinion is that Arabs are very much inclined to give their labour if they can get what they are not accustomed to get—daily or weekly pay. I had once to dig a trench from the mouth of the Sbat-el-Arab, the river conveying the combined waters of the Euphrates and Tigris to the sea. It was in length about three or four miles, and it was designed to bury the cable brought from the Persian Gulf up to a convenient spot for connection with the land-posts and wires of the Turkish Asiatic Telegraph. This part of the work was entrusted to me, and although rather novel in character, it was not distasteful, for it enabled me to acquire some knowledge of the Arab of the locality. It was not, however, an easy matter, for I could not at first get any sure amount of labour, and the labourers were somewhat refractory, that is, they were subordinate enough in one sense, but they were always fighting with one another. There were two main divisions, the Persian Arabs, and those from the Arabian side of the river, the Doâsir and the Fas Arabs. However, it was my practice at the end of the day's work to make the men sit down in a ring and to see each one paid for his labour performed. This measure had an excellent effect. On the second day we got more than on the first, on the third more than on the second, and at last we got from three to four hundred men, who worked very well indeed. Physically speaking, they were just the set of labourers required for hard manual labour; and the week's experience showed me that, had we stayed where we were, we might have got as many men as we pleased. On the commercial question I will say little, but the railway would pass near enough to Mesopotamia to utilize it for the transport of grain from that renowned granary. After reaching the Euphrates it would in all probability become part of other systems which have in this been contemplated. I remember reading in a work on America that hotels were not commonly built there in places where there was any large number of residents and visitors, but where there were few or none. The hotel was not built to meet the requirements of a community, but the mere creation of an hotel attracted lodgers and frequenters, and the town followed. Much in the same manner a railway such as proposed (or say from Alexandretta), if it existed, would bring traffic to itself, and would, I believe, be found to be of great benefit commercially in its junction lines and generally in developing traffic and international intercourse. I will not trouble you with any further remarks on a very large question, and one on which much remains to be said, and will perhaps yet be said on a future or fitter opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not going to presume to say more than a very few words on the subject of Sir Frederic Goldsmid's paper, especially as it is one which he has considered so long, and which all the other gentlemen have spoken upon with large personal experience and knowledge. I certainly was very much struck with what Sir Arnold Kemball said, because what we have to recollect in this case, I think, is not so much how serviceable to us some things appear likely to be in certain contingencies, as how these things are to be carried out. There is only one way in which such a scheme as this can be carried out, I believe, and that is by the vote of the English Parliament; and the question is, what arguments can be brought forward which would be likely to move the English Parliament to take up and give money for such a scheme. I think that is the great difficulty. Even if we had a railway across this greater isthmus, as we may call it, it would only be, as far as I can see, in preparation for a contingency which might or might not occur for years: and during all those years of waiting until this contingency occurred, I think there can be no doubt we should be making use of the Suez Canal, and not of this railway, for the transport of troops and for all other important purposes. It seems to me

difficult to conceive how such an expensive line could be maintained, perhaps for many years, waiting for this contingency, which might or might not occur. Moreover, it seems to me that the strong communications of England will always be those which we can approach most nearly, and guard most effectively with our fleets and our ships. Now the Canal has in that respect a vast advantage, and always will have; and therefore it is, in my judgment, the line of communication on which we ought to concentrate our powers and efforts to preserve it open and accessible to us. As regards the possibility of its being blocked up, as Mr. Haddan indicated, no doubt this might very easily be done, but that is an argument why we should direct our energies, not only to securing our free use of the Canal, but also to the construction of a railway alongside of the Canal to meet such contingencies as that, in precedence of all other possible lines. That is a work which would be comparatively inexpensive, and the utility of which could not be questioned. However, as I said, I am not at this moment prepared to enter into a detailed discussion of the subject, and I shall pass on to a conclusion by moving the thanks of the meeting to our friend, Sir Frederic Goldsmid. I must say that I look with great admiration on a man whose time is so fully occupied as his is, and yet who grudges not to devote to a subject of this sort, not merely for the benefit of this Institution, but for the advantage of the public, who profit by his studies through these lectures, such an amount of labour, of rare experience, ability, and of originality, as he has gratuitously expended in the preparation of this lecture. I beg, then, now to propose that the thanks of the meeting be given to Sir Frederic Goldsmid for his admirable paper.

(For private circulation only.)

LECTURE.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR HENRY C. RAWLINSON, K.C.B., F.R.S.,
&c., &c., in the Chair.

THE STRATEGICAL CONDITIONS OF OUR INDIAN NORTH-WEST FRONTIER.

By Major-General E. B. HAMLEY, C.B., R.A.

I APPEAR here, in compliance with the desire of the Committee, to offer some remarks on our Indian frontier. I should not have ventured to volunteer to do so, and I do it, I will not say with reluctance, for I am happy to comply with any wish of the Committee, but certainly not without misgiving, feeling that among you there are certainly some, perhaps many, Indian officials of the highest distinction. But I am encouraged by the thought that a personal acquaintance with a territory is not indispensable to the formation of strategical opinions about it—if it were, the majority of the most famous campaigns would never have been fought. I am encouraged, too, by feeling how little aid the subject requires from me to render it interesting—never has the interest it has excited been so strong as now, though for nearly thirty years it has been warmly discussed by the best minds in India. These still contest each other's conclusions, from widely divergent points of view, and I may therefore perhaps consider it a point in my favour that I have approached the subject without bias, as I would any other strategical problem, desirous only of arriving at a right conclusion, and uninfluenced by the weight of opinion on the one side or the other.

First, let us look to the Indus—often spoken of as the natural frontier of India. To be a good line of defence a river, besides being difficult to cross, should have protected bridges in the possession of the defender, connected by good communications on the defender's bank, and that bank should, at important points, command the other. The Indus is unbridged by any permanent structure. In its upper half it is a swift, even turbulent, stream flowing mostly in a deep rocky bed—from 100 to 400 yards wide—in its lower, though still swift, it flows between flat banks and frequently changes its channel—insomuch that the bridge of one year might be left on dry ground

the next. When the snows melt the river rises and spreads widely over its banks—thus bridges would at times be swept away or submerged, and roads along the bank would be useless. There is a bridge of boats at Attock which has been frequently carried away, and another was thrown two years ago at Khooshalghur. Nevertheless, I believe that permanent bridges might be thrown—it is merely a question of expense. The left bank is flat throughout and is frequently commanded by the right. These are circumstances to be taken into account when we are told that the Indus is the proper frontier of India.

Beyond the river, at an average distance of some fifty miles, runs the frontier line, which let us define for the present purpose as limited on the right by a point opposite the Khyber, on the left by one opposite the Bolan. The distance measured along the river in rear of this line from Attock to Sukkur is about 500 miles, the frontier line of course being considerably longer. This frontier runs for great part of its length along the foot of a mountain range, penetrated between the Bolan and the Khyber only by a few difficult passes. Now of all barriers, that which gives most security, next perhaps to a great desert, is a range of this kind, and hence a few thousand men to prevent the depredations of the hill tribes, suffice to protect an extent of frontier which, were it of a different kind, with a powerful neighbour on the other side, would demand, in case of a formidable war, vast armies, and even in peace very considerable forces, for its defence. There are several passes between the two I have named, but besides the Khyber, it will only be necessary to speak of two in this part of the frontier, the Koorum, issuing in our territory at Thull and Kohat, and the Gomal, issuing opposite Dera Ismail Khan. Others exist—there is one that issues in the bed of the Koorum river near Thull—but besides that we know little of them, except that they are exceedingly difficult, there is another reason why I should not occupy any time in describing any south of the Gomal.

There will be no dispute that the Khyber is, of these three, the fittest for the passage of a column of all arms. It is much the shortest, the easiest, the best supplied with water, and connects directly the most important points, namely, the city of Cabul with a favourable place for bridging the Indus at Attock, whence, by the great road, to Lahore, and thence into the valley of the Ganges.

Of the Koorum we have learnt a good deal. It is easy of passage all the way from the Indus to the Peiwar Pass, but from thence to the point where it joins the hill road between Cabul and Ghizni, at Kushi, it is of exceeding difficulty, impassable for any kind of vehicle, and rendering the supply of even a lightly equipped column an arduous task. Whether General Roberts had at first any vehicles in his train I do not know. It is to be inferred that he had not, from the fact that his light guns were carried on mules, his heavier artillery on the backs of elephants—however this may be, we may be certain he has none now. The issue of this pass in our territory at Thull is 100 miles from that of the Khyber. A column so strong and well-equipped as to be independent could not pass here; one that

could not act independently would scarcely venture; and it is not likely, therefore, that any serious attack will be made by way of the Koorum, or of that other pass which issues near it.

The Gomal, from Ghizni, does not present the insuperable difficulties of the Koorum, and could be made practicable, though not easy, for a column of all arms; at the best it would still present much steep broken extent of track, and many narrow passes. It is very circuitous, and about a third longer than the Khyber, from which it is distant 200 miles.

In forming an idea of a march in force through such passes, it may assist us to remember that an English Army Corps, say 24,000 strong with artillery, extends with its combatant forces only, on a European road about 16 miles in length, and with its trains 27 miles. Allowing only a slight increase for the nature of the road, the combatants of a similar force in the pass would stretch 18 miles, the total with trains 30. Thus, when the head of the combatant column issued from the pass, its rear would be nearly two days' march behind; and considering the host of animals required for the necessary supplies on such an expedition, the rear of the trains could then scarcely be less than six days behind the head of the column, that is to say, only about two marches beyond Jellalabad.

Accustomed as we are to see the mountain chains of Europe successfully passed by great armies, we must be careful to remember how different in depth are those ranges from the hills of Afghanistan. In a couple of marches the Prussian armies were through the Bohemian mountains, and presently combined in the attack at Sadowa. But here, the shortest pass through the barrier, that between Caubul and the Indus Valley, is 190 miles long—the Gomal nearly 300 miles—and not days but weeks are occupied in the isolated march.

Now, when we remember what an invading army of India implies—that it shall bear with it the means of passing the Indus—that it shall be prepared to encounter the forces of our Indian Empire—and that, thus formidable in numbers and equipment, it must rely for supplies on the path through which it has issued, we shall form some idea of the difficulties which would encompass an army in its attempt to enter India by these routes; and these difficulties I will ask you to bear in mind when I recur to this part of the subject. Let us next see what conditions another part of the theatre may present. But first let me pause to say what I understand by an invading army. Not all the assembled forces of the Afghans—not such a Russian force as we saw lately assembling on the frontier of Bokhara—not such an army as Persia can at present send forth—any or all of these would fall far short of the requirements of such an enterprise. But I will suppose that Russia has completed those improvements in her communications which we know she persistently contemplates; that she has united the Caspian and the Aral by a railway; or that, combining with Persia, she has made a convenient way from the southern shore of the Caspian to Herat; that the ruler of Afghanistan has thrown in his lot with them; and that within the fortified triangle Herat, Kandahar, Caubul, the dispositions for this great undertaking have been brought

deliberately, with all the aids of military science, to completion. We may be assured that an invading army of India, such as we cannot afford to despise, will be no improvised force, no barbarous horde, but truly formidable in numbers, organization, and leadership. And I will further assume for the moment that, as has been so often recommended, we await the attack in the valley of the Indus.

From Caubul the confederated forces of the enemy, posted as I have suggested, will threaten an advance through the western passes; from Kandahar they will threaten an advance through the Bolan. Let us follow the movements of what we may call the enemy's Army of the Bolan, assembled about Kandahar. As it moves south it will find the character of the country very different from that of the mountain districts of the north. The hills are no longer of impenetrable aspect; manœuvring ground exists almost everywhere; a great part of the country consists of extensive plains; and though there are a few passes, formidable if held, yet they are by no means such obstacles as those of the Suleiman range. Over one of these, the Khojak, the road passes to Quetta. From thence the main road, and that chiefly used by caravans travelling to the Indus valley, is through the Bolan Pass to Dadur. There is another excellent road to Khelat. From Khelat there are two ways into this portion of the Indus valley, one direct but difficult, the other circuitous but practicable, both leading on Gundava. But the best road, one that with a little labour might be called good, is that through the Bolan, the length of which pass is 59 miles.

But when I speak of these roads issuing in the valley of the Indus, I must indicate the circumstances under which they enter it. The mountain barrier which has continued to define our frontier down to a point in advance of Mittree on the Indus, there turns west and forms the frontier of Khelat for a considerable distance, when it resumes its southerly direction. It follows that the right bank of the Indus from about Mittree to far below Larkhana is an immense plain. Travellers passing along the river there, see the horizon extending like that of the ocean. Into this great plain the Army of the Bolan would issue at a hundred miles from our frontier, and, while halting to concentrate its lengthened columns, and to fortify the passes in its rear, it would see before it a space of the valley of at least 150 miles in width, on any part of which to direct its attack; and having formed its plan it could, I am told on the best authority, advance in the dry season nearly everywhere across this plain on a wide formation and accompanied closely by all its trains and baggage. Regular routes lead from Gundava upon Larkhana, while Dadur, besides being in direct communication with Gundava, is the place whence most of the roads diverge leading to points in the specified portion of the Indus valley.

Now, though this plain is poor, and though it requires a little experienced management to obtain a good supply of water from it, I would put it to you whether such an invading army as I have imagined could reasonably hope for more favourable circumstances in which to enter a theatre of war than those in which it would here find itself.

Pausing for a moment here, let us look back to the other side of the theatre, and suppose that an army is also moving from Caubul to the Indus valley. We know that it will advance in long processional order down the Gomal or the Khyber Passes—that it will issue at once through narrow gaps, into the presence of the defender's troops—that it will have, or ought to have, to fight with the heads of its columns even for the power of making its first deployments, and that where deployed the greater part of the army will have at its back, not practicable lines of supply, or of retreat, but impassable mountains. It will not be contested that this is a very different situation from that of the Bolan Army—in the one case we have an army issuing, in the form of columns, close to the enemy—in the other an army advancing on a full front with the enemy still at a distance. I conclude, therefore, that however the enemy may think it proper to distract us by feints or diversions here, the main line of advance will be on the Lower Indus.

Next, as to how we should meet the invasion. The port of Kurrachee is a point where troops and stores from England, from our Mediterranean stations, from Bombay, can easily and conveniently concentrate. It is also the terminus of the Indus Valley Railway, which, if not actually completed, is so near completion that I will take it as an accomplished fact. By rail, and also by the river, navigable for large steamers to beyond Sukkur, the readiest means exist of concentrating from home and elsewhere, as indicated, upon the Lower Indus. From Lahore, by Mooltan, the same part of the Indus is reached by rail—the communication across the river being by steamboat. And from Lahore also a railway now extending to, or beyond Jelum, and which will shortly reach the Indus, affords a ready means of reinforcing Peshawur. This Indus Valley railway is not to be measured by the capacities of our English railways. It is only a single line, burns wood for fuel, and maintains but a moderate rate of speed. But, as it is, it is invaluable; it enables the Bengal troops to combine easily with those of Bombay, and it gives great facility for reinforcing either extremity of our frontier line. The Quetta column has already profited by it, having been conveyed by rail from Mooltan to a station opposite Mitten Kote; and all troops from Bombay or Kurrachee will also experience its benefits. And in a more momentous crisis than the present, such a one as I have been supposing to exist, we should bring our whole force to bear in this part of the theatre. In fact, there is, I think, no spot in the world where we could make such a military display of strength at short notice as on the Lower Indus. Thus, with the passes suitably guarded, the Army of the Lower Indus assembled beyond the river, the reserves at Lahore and Mooltan ready to reinforce either of our two Armies, we should be in a situation full of promise, and it was the consideration of it which caused me to express elsewhere the opinion that we ought, with good management, to give an excellent account of any foe who should attack us in the valley of the Indus.

But good grounds as there are for taking that view on our side, I

have also just endeavoured to show that the enemy's Army of the Bolan would meet us here under the most favourable circumstances that it could possibly hope for—its rear secured, its front open, its advance easy, and with a wide space of our frontier upon which to direct its operations. Moreover, it is to be observed that the railway so invaluable as our line of communication, and protected in its upper portion by the river, runs from Sukkur to Kurrachee on the right bank, and that we could scarcely hope, before having fought a decisive action, to guard it against the enemy's enterprises throughout the wide extent on which they would menace it. I will, therefore, now pass to the consideration of whether we shall not meet that enemy to much better advantage on a more advanced line.

The argument which is always put forward in support of the plan of remaining on the defensive is, that we should thus await amid our resources an enemy who would have advanced to a great distance from his. The argument thus stated would imply that it is always judicious to await invasion. But this is manifestly not true, for the majority of brilliant campaigns have been those of invasion. It is sometimes a judicious course, sometimes not. It is judicious when adopted by the weaker nation, deficient in the money, material, and organization which an offensive campaign implies, and at the same time possessing a frontier and a country topographically strong. But we certainly should not like to consider ourselves as likely to be the weaker party, either in resources or in organization, in the contest I have contemplated. Again, a defensive war will often combine the parts of an otherwise discordant empire in a patriotic union against the common enemy. But it is, I believe, the concurrent testimony of all Indians, that there is no territory on which it could be more perilous to give an enemy the chance of winning a battle than our Indian Empire.

Let us look, then, towards a more advanced line; and here our task is much simplified by the fact that we have already occupied Quetta. By doing so, it is *we* who are in the position of commanding an avenue into the enemy's country, and of securing the passes in our rear; while we have the further inestimable advantage of having reached the back of the mountain district—that is to say, of holding the issue of the frontier, and of seeing before us a country, not of course without its difficulties, but offering at the same time immensely increased facilities for skilled operations. We are thus, too, carrying forward our theatre of war out of our own territory, which we cover by our advance. And for communications, besides those before enumerated, the construction of the branch railway from the Indus to Dadur, already designed and officially talked of as intended, will annul in great degree the distance of Quetta from the frontier and remove any difficulties attending the march.

Looking next at the avenues *out* of Quetta, we find the high road to Kandahar, which offers no difficulty to the march of any column, except the Khojak Pass, the nature of which as an obstacle has, I believe, been greatly exaggerated. Another road to the left of it passes also over the Khojak range; and there is still another marked on the side of the desert. But, though our troops, in former campaigns,

frequently marched through that country, being in small bodies they moved only on one road, and we know nothing from actual observation of the two I have mentioned. There is another road which, branching north-east from the Kandahar road, a little way out of Quetta, traverses the hill country, and this, though very rugged, we know can be used by troops of all arms, for the Bombay division moved by it in the former war from Ghuzni upon Quetta. And what I would specially call attention to, lest you should think I had dismissed the subject of the passes too briefly, is that by occupying Quetta we practically close all passes to the Indus Valley which issue south of Dera Ismail Khan.

Strategically, then, I hope there remains no doubt of the immense advantage of holding Quetta, whether as a means of controlling Afghanistan or of meeting such a formidable combination of enemies as I have contemplated. Proceeding to inquire what tactical features it may offer, it appears that, on passing the Bolan, the road goes for some twelve miles over a waterless plain, before entering the cultivated district, also a plain, which surrounds the town. Quetta stands found an isolated conical hill which commands the plain behind it, but is itself commanded by high ground in its front. It became, therefore, of importance to know how this might be remedied: and I am informed by the very capable Officer who surveyed the district, that a mile or two in front of the town, and within Khelat territory, there is an excellent position, far out of reach of any other commanding ground, and dominating the valley beyond. This seems to be confirmed by a late telegram from there, which mentions an additional fort just constructed as having rendered Quetta quite impregnable. On the left of Quetta, between it and the desert, the line of hills is only passable at a single gap; and a similar range, not passable at all, exists on the right. Tactically, then, as well as strategically, for defence, as well as offence, against either a powerful or an inferior enemy, it would appear alike advantageous; and while the policy of taking possession of it has for many years been powerfully opposed, and while the measure was carried into effect almost unnoticed in this country, it appears, if the advantages are such as I have stated, that we have here the most valuable possession on which England has laid her hand for many a day.

Having got so far, however, the question is not yet settled of whether we have yet reached our most advantageous frontier. I have considered the confederated forces as within the triangle Herat, Caubul, Kandahar—the richest, most open, and most temperate portion of Afghanistan: and if they meant to attack us, whether in the valley of the Indus, or at Quetta, their position would be strong, and strong also against attack. Caubul would, so long as they might hold it, threaten Peshawur—and Kandahar would form a strong point of concentration for an advance. And the hostile Army so placed might without imprudence, send an advanced force to occupy the Khojak Pass, the only very difficult or specially defensible part of the road between Quetta and Kandahar, about 90 miles from Kandahar, 60 from

Quetta, thus acquiring the option of receiving battle there, and, in case of its advance, the gaining of so much ground.

I will go on, then, to suppose that the result of our present operations is to give us the power, if we choose to use it, of occupying Kandahar, with a small space beyond it, necessary to complete its strategical value. The obstacle of the Khojak would thus disappear. At Kandahar, the richest district of Afghanistan lies before us. Several practicable roads lead from thence on Ghuzni and Caubul on the one side, on Herat on the other—and others lead from it down the Helmund to the Persian frontier and thence on Meshed, in the rear of Herat. The space beyond should therefore include a portion of the Helmund river, with the command of the passage at Girishk. Of the communications with Quetta I have already spoken.

It is to be noted that between Herat and Caubul, two of the great cities which I have supposed the enemy to occupy, lies the range of the Hazareh mountains, the road through which, between those cities, is so bad that the circuit by Kandahar, or by a route north of the mountains, is generally preferred. Hence another important consequence would follow from our occupation of Kandahar, namely, the rupture of the enemy's front; for if he occupied Caubul we could isolate the forces there from those at Herat—if he did not, we should be free to bring our whole strength to bear on the side of Herat. At Kandahar, too, we should hold such a position towards Persia as would seriously affect her relations with Russia; and finally, our presence there would be almost decisive against any design of the enemy to invade India through the passes. Observe, I do not say annex but occupy Kandahar, by friendly treaty, as we now occupy Quetta.

I think it is impossible to deny that our Army posted here, in a delightful climate, and with such strategical possibilities open to it, could desire no better field in which to contest with Russia and her allies the Empire of India. And perhaps many of you will think with me that the leader of that army will be, in his opportunities, the most fortunate British soldier whom we have seen since Wellington.

Resting here, it becomes necessary to look at the other side of the strategical theatre, and to consider the question of an advance of our frontier-line from the Indus valley in that quarter also.

The road from the eastern issue of the Khyber to Caubul is marked by two chief difficulties. With those of the Koord Khyber we are sufficiently familiar. Issuing from it a more open region presents itself, extending beyond Jellabad.

The idea that some advance of our frontier might be expedient has come to be generally contemplated; this is tantamount in many minds to considering that any step forward must be advantageous; and one step that finds favour is that of pushing the frontier forward on this side to Jellabad. One reason assigned for this is that we should thus command the valley which ascends from behind Jellabad to Chitral. This point would never, I confess, have occurred to me had it not been indicated elsewhere; it seems to imply that we may expect the Russians that way. But what does such an expectation mean? It means that Russia, after pushing her forces to the sources of the

Oxus—after forming a secondary base or fresh starting point on the plateau of Pashir—after crossing the Hindu Koosh—is to march 250 miles down this valley, and for what? If she desires to reach either Caubul or the Khyber, surely she will possess herself of a more direct and convenient route to those places. If she does, why take this? If she does not, is it to be supposed that she will enter on such an enterprise by such a line? But it will be seen that the case can be provided for in a general plan, and I will pass to the other reason that has been assigned, namely, that we should thus have secured the passage of the Khyber. Now, the permanent occupation of a point beyond that pass must have either a defensive or offensive object. First, as to the defensive. If a point in advance of the Khyber were the knot where a number of roads united which led from thence into the Indus Valley, the policy of occupying it would be obvious. But it covers nothing, and commands nothing, but the pass itself. Now the difficulty of supply by such a road would prevent a very large force from being permanently posted there. On the other hand there is nothing to prevent a powerful enemy who may possess Caubul from bringing any force he pleases to attack the permanent post in advance of the Khyber, which must then be reinforced if possible from the rear. Nor would the difficulty be remedied—on the contrary increased—if our defensive post were pushed further, through the pass beyond, to the Caubul valley; a measure which, I believe, nobody has ventured to propose. On the other hand, if the reason for proposing to take up such a position is that we should thus have accomplished a step towards obtaining entrance into the district beyond the mountains in an offensive campaign, we must remember that between that district and Jellalabad there are many difficult marches and at least one most formidable pass. None but a strong and well-equipped force, in fact an Army, could venture thus to menace such a fortress, with such support beyond it, as Caubul would present under the circumstances I have imagined.

Now it is to be noted that an Army here would be separated from an Army on the Lower Indus by at least 500 miles—from one at Quetta by at least 700 miles—from one at Kandahar by 850 miles. The British armies would, therefore, be under separate commands, and operating with distinct objects; nor could they combine except after important successes gained within the enemy's territory. The enemy, on the other hand, would possess the advantage of operating from a common centre against widely separated bodies advancing towards that centre. In fact, considering the difficulties of supplying this Khyber Army, we should be voluntarily adopting, in its worst form, the double line with all its disadvantages, and without the excuse of necessity, since we could throw our whole weight with full advantage on the other side. I think, therefore, there is much to be said against, nothing for, the occupation of a post beyond the Khyber, and that it would be a source not of strength but of weakness.

In saying what I think should not be done, I am prepared to say what I think should be done on this side; and it is satisfactory to me to think that the alternative plan, while, in my opinion,

the best in the military sense, involves no extension of territory, no expenditure worth mention, and no increase of frontier force. It consists, first, in blocking the mouths of the Khyber on our side of it with an intrenched camp armed with powerful artillery, to be garrisoned by the Peshawur troops, reinforced in case of need. If this were suitably occupied, I cannot conceive how an enemy's force, however superior, advancing, as it must of necessity, in lengthened, even straggling, array to the mouth of the Khyber, could expect ever to issue from it. It seems to be one of those cases where a fortress, often so doubtful an expedient, would be absolutely effectual. By fortress I mean those lines of works about a central work, that combination of fortress and camp, affording space for the manoeuvres of its garrison, which modern engineering science considers the best kind of stronghold. And to view the matter by the light of comparison, let us suppose an attempt to secure the other end of the frontier, in Sind, with its 150 miles of flat front, by means of fortresses. It is evident that in that quarter a single fortress would not suffice—a system of fortresses would be needed, such as would swallow up an army. But in front of the Khyber a very moderate force in a single line of works would answer the purpose.

In like manner, an intrenched camp armed with heavy artillery might be placed at the issue of the Golan Pass and occupied by the garrison of Dera Ismail Khan; and another, though rather to strengthen the feeling of security than from necessity, in front of the Koorum.

To complete the system of defence, these posts should have in their rear protected passages over the Indus, connected with the railway by branch lines.

It is necessary to notice the plan of sending troops up the different passes and occupying the crests by way of advancing our frontier. Now I scarcely think that those who propose it have considered what it would be to maintain permanent posts on those inclement crests, with only such lines of communication and supply behind them as the valleys afford. And considering them as a preparation for subsequent operations in a campaign, we should, in using these passes for an advance, be operating not by double but by quadruple or quintuple lines of operations. Surely it would be nothing short of criminal thus to fritter away our strength when we can unite our forces, under a single leader, on the side of Quetta or Kandahar.

To leave no alternative untouched, I will now suppose that we have pushed through all the passes, made the mountain territory ours, and placed our posts on the road from Caubul to Kandahar. Let us consider for a moment how an extensive frontier is generally guarded. The line of communication between the posts should pass not through, but behind their front. Any of them when driven back should have secure lines by which to find support from others, and all when retiring should possess, in numerous roads, the means of concentrating upon important points. But what of this do we see in our supposed new frontier? There we have bodies widely apart, isolated by the first advance of the enemy, each with its own narrow pass to retire into—entering which it continues to be isolated from the others for weeks,

till it emerges, still at a great distance from them, in our present territory. I trust we shall not incur the charge of such a vast extent of barren territory, with its savage populations, for such a result as this, and that our notion of a rectified frontier will not include any of these isolated lines and posts thus unmeaningly thrust forward into the mountains. Any good that could possibly be hoped for from them would be much more effectually accomplished by the force at Kandahar.

Apart from the question of a more formidable foe; it appears to be believed that these posts pushed up the passes would lessen the chances of future contests with the unruly hill-tribes. That they are unruly would appear an excellent reason for keeping them in our front rather than in our rear. Posts separated by such distances and such inaccessible country, can exercise no influence on the inhabitants between; on the contrary we should thus be offering them new and potent means of molesting us. I fear that slenderly-escorted convoys would offer irresistible temptations to the half-starved hill-tribes. Such a measure then, in time of war most mischievous, as multiplying chances of disaster, would be in time of peace costly and burthensome, for it would not in the least obviate the necessity of keeping up our present line of frontier guards.

When, in the former war, our forces moved on Kandahar, the tribes of the south were no less hostile and mischievous to us than those of the north, and every march from the Bolan to the Khojak was marked by their depredations on our trains, by the slaughter of their conductors, by the murder of stray soldiers and numbers of defenceless camp followers. But a few years afterwards they were rendered thoroughly peaceable and friendly by vigorous handling and judicious management. At least one most distinguished Officer who took a leading part in the process still lives to tell us what the process was. It might be worth trying on other parts of the frontier; however that may be, the result for us, and one well worth taking into account, is that, to all appearance, our trains march as safely now from the Indus to the Khojak as from London to Aldershot.

The plan, then, to which I arrive at the end of this train of reasoning, has at least the merit of simplicity. The camps in front of the passes become the fixed pivot of operations: the main forces, assembled in the first instance where they can most easily assemble, that is to say, on the Lower Indus, are the active army. As I have said, I should feel confident of the result even in the valley of the Indus; I think our position vastly improved by the occupation of Quetta; but I should think it all we could desire if we occupied Kandahar. And whichever of these two points we select for the advanced post of our line it must be made the site of an intrenched camp powerfully armed, the railway to Dadur must be made, and the roads between it and the camp everywhere improved.

There is one case in which the garrison of the camp watching the Khyber might cease to be merely a defensive force. If, in the course of the campaign, as is likely, the Kandahar Army or part of it should

invest Caubul, the troops might come though the Khyber to join in the siege and probably in subsequent operations.

Thus, then, I have endeavoured to sketch a definite plan upon which to concentrate our resources, and by which to secure a scientific frontier, and a permanent settlement of this large question. Looking at the northern half of this part of our territory, I think we should be thankful for possessing a frontier so easily rendered impregnable. Looking at the southern half, we have no less reason to be thankful for having acquired, in Quetta, such means of vigorous and effective action, and such an opportunity of securing new advantages of the most important and decisive kind. With a garrison strongly posted in its lines at Kandahar, with all the routes and stages by which our forces might be assembled on that point, all sources of supply, and all arrangements for transport, laid down, as our trained Staff Officers are certainly capable of laying them down, we might view calmly any possible complications before us, whether arising from the augmented military power of Russia in the East, from the success of her intrigues, or from her open hostility. The grounds of our assurance would be manifest and easily understood, our native subjects would soon learn to appreciate them, and what would be security for us would be tranquillity for India.

LORD LYTTON

AND

THE AFGHAN WAR. .

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BY

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AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF INDIA.

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THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE importance of England's mission in the East can hardly be exaggerated, nor the results dependent upon its right appreciation by British Statesmen. Those Statesmen are responsible to the British people, who themselves ultimately share the responsibility, if they sanction the acts of their representatives. We have entered upon a war, the political consequences of which no one can foresee; but it will most probably entail a great loss of life, and certainly a large expenditure of money. In this crisis any individual, however humble, who, like the writer of this pamphlet, has been employed on the scene of action in former days, and has filled official situations which have given him the opportunity of studying the question, may be pardoned if he venture to place before his countrymen the conclusions at which he has arrived. If he can contribute in the slightest degree to the formation of a sound public opinion, if he can enforce caution, or correct error, his object will be attained. He has no party purpose in view. The honour, the justice, the interests of England, and the welfare and prosperity of India, are too dear to him to allow of his descending into the arena of party strife. He feels assured that the majority of thoughtful Englishmen only desire to have

brought before them the real facts of the case, to throw their influence into what they believe to be the right cause. But they must have the whole case, and all the documents necessary to enable them to form an impartial judgment upon it, and not a mere statement of the case on one side. Has the whole case—have all the requisite documents—been laid before the public? No unprejudiced person can answer these questions in the affirmative. Is it not a fact that authentic and official documents were long withheld, while one-sided statements and memoranda by men holding high positions under the Government, and therefore supposed to have access to the best means of information, were put forward from time to time to bias the public mind? Have not inspired telegrams, containing exciting intelligence calculated to arouse public indignation, been transmitted from India only to be diluted or explained away shortly afterwards? We were told, for instance, that the letter of Sher Ali, the full text of which was conveyed in the Viceroy's telegram of the 19th of October, but not published until recently, was of an insolent and defiant nature.

Why was it not given to the public at once, so as to enable competent persons to judge for themselves whether the interpretation put upon it by Lord Lytton was borne out by its tone and language, and why were not the letters from our officers to his officials to which Sher Ali referred also given? Without these letters of which he complained no fair judgment could be come to as to the provocation which led to the Amír's conduct. We have Sher Ali's letter now at page 252 of the "Afghanistan Papers," and it is characterized by Lord Lytton as "intentionally rude, conveying a direct challenge, and that any demand for an apology would only expose us to fresh insult." In order to form a correct opinion upon it, in common justice to the Amír, the Persian text ought to be submitted to ripe Oriental scholars, of whom there are several in the Council of India. But taking the English translation as it stands, few impartial persons will, it is believed, support Lord Lytton's view; and even the Ministers themselves, by very properly directing that a further communication should be forwarded to Sher Ali, would seem to have cast doubt on the

Viceroy's hasty conclusion. We have not before us, even now, all the information which would enable the English people to form a judgment as to the principles and policy which have plunged the country into what many consider to be an unnecessary, impolitic, and unjust war. Without having any voice on a question in which their interests are so deeply concerned, the nation has been compelled to take a tremendous leap in the dark. The most complete success must be attended by all the horrors and evils which follow in the train of war. Only the clearest and most undoubted necessity could justify the recourse to that extreme arbitrament. Did that necessity exist? and if it did exist where is it going to lead the country? Will not our difficulties be increased rather than diminished by the attainment of the ends proposed by the policy of the present Government? Shall we not be in a worse position, both in a military and a political point of view, even if the most entire success crown our efforts? These are questions of paramount importance to the people of England, requiring the utmost calmness and impartiality to come to a wise and right decision. But can a calm and deliberate judgment be hoped for, when some of the noblest of our citizens, and those the best capable of giving advice, are denounced with bitterness because they venture to resist the popular feeling, and strive to instruct the public mind? Such efforts are not incompatible with true patriotism; on the contrary, they have their origin in a sacred jealousy of their country's honour and reputation, and in a solemn sense of Christian duty.

But independently of the great principles of justice and morality, which are involved in this question of the War in Afghanistan, there are other questions of the highest importance, in relation to the new mode of governing India, which it behoves the English Parliament and people to look in the face, and at the proper time to exact a full explanation. Every day more and more startling disclosures are made of information withheld, of constitutional forms infringed and disregarded, and of a system of personal government inaugurated in the highest degree dangerous to our Indian Empire. We have the letters of those

eminent Indian functionaries, Sir Arthur Hobhouse and Sir Henry Norman. We have the suppressed minutes of Sir William Muir, replete with sound sense and ripe experience of our Indian administration.

What does Sir Arthur Hobhouse write?—

“Whether the mode of conducting Indian affairs during Lord Salisbury’s tenure of office has been in accordance with law, with previous practice, or with public policy, is a question fraught, as I think, with interest and importance to the nation, but quite apart from personalities.”

What food for reflection, what cause for anxiety, does not this pregnant sentence (emanating from one who has held with distinction the highest legal office in India) suggest to the minds of those conversant with Indian affairs.

John Mill said truly :—

“The great constitutional security for the good government of India lies in the forms of business.” “The Minister, placed in office by the action of political party, except in very rare cases, can possess little or no knowledge of India.”

The Viceroy, selected from similar party considerations, is, generally, equally inexperienced in Indian affairs. Both are assisted by Councils composed of eminent men, who have filled the highest offices in India, and bring to their work a thorough knowledge of all branches of Indian administration and of the peculiar usages, feelings, and prejudices of the people of India. English Statesmen of large minds, and comprehensive European experience, collect the opinions of their distinguished Councillors, weigh them well, and come to their own conclusions. This has hitherto been the practice of the greatest Indian Viceroys, and of the ablest Secretaries of State for India. Where differences of opinion have existed, the dissentients in the Councils have had the opportunity of recording their views, and in this manner both sides of the various important questions which constantly arise in the government of India have been placed before Parliament and the country. Even the bitterest opponents of the East India Company always admitted its excellence as a Government of record.

It appears that this salutary check on hasty and inconsiderate action has been lately set aside, or at all events greatly curtailed, both at home and abroad, and the evil results are already too apparent. Lord Salisbury testifies, in the House of Lords, that "in industry, caution, and sound hard discretion Lord Lytton has not been exceeded by any Viceroy who preceded him." Gibbon writes:—"Abu Rafe, servant of Mahomet, testifies to the wielding, as a buckler, by Ali of the ponderous gate of a fortress, which he and seven other men could not lift." Gibbon adds:—"Abu Rafe was an eye-witness, but who will be witness for Abu Rafe?" After a perusal of the "Afghanistan Correspondence," especially of the conversations of the Viceroy with Nuwab Atta Mahomed Khan, it will require more than Lord Salisbury's testimony to convince the thinking portion of the English people of the "caution and sound hard discretion of Lord Lytton."

All sorts of doctrines have been put forward by the Press, and by the writers who support the Imperial policy of the present Government, in reference to our relations with the Amír of Cabul, and, by implication, with the Native States of India. Some of these doctrines, enunciated by men of great intellectual power, appear to be so erroneous, and so opposed to the principles which have hitherto generally guided the policy of the British Government, that it behoves every man who has been connected with the administration of India, and who holds strong opinions of their dangerous tendency, to protest against their promulgation and adoption. Amongst erroneous assumptions it has been persistently affirmed that the Amír of Cabul has no claim to independence, because his father Dost Mahomed and he himself have received subsidies from the Indian Government. Has England never subsidized European States? What of Prussia and Portugal? Frederick of Prussia, in the seven years' war, through our subsidies kept the French armies employed near their own frontier, and thus enabled England to maintain her superiority in India and in America. Lord Chatham himself said:—"I have conquered America in Germany." Portugal preserved her very existence by the aid of the subsidies of England, but neither Prussia nor

Portugal on that account ceased to be regarded as independent Powers. There is, however, an illustration nearer at hand to Cabul. The Shah of Persia, through a long series of years, received subsidies from the Indian Government, but no one ever maintained that Persia therefore forfeited her independence.

Sir James Stephen, in his discussion of the Afghan question, has laid down principles which would seem to override the rights of every Asiatic State, and place them entirely at the mercy and discretion of the British Government. "Our relations with these States," he writes, "must be determined by the fact that we are exceedingly powerful and highly civilized, and that they are comparatively weak, and half barbarous." But it will be better to quote the whole passage, which is couched in a tone of national self-assertion calculated to wound the feelings and excite the resentment of all Native Princes and Asiatic Rulers, whether within our own territories or in countries adjacent to them.

If an Englishman, on perusal of these paragraphs, feels his blood tingle and his pulse beat high with indignation at such despotic doctrines, what must be the feelings of Princes like Sindia and Holkar, or of such enlightened Statesmen as Sir Salar Jung and Sir Madava Rao, or of the Amír of Cabul, who look at such questions from quite a different point of view, and take their stand upon the obligations of treaties and the broad rules of morality and justice, which are as applicable to the weak as to the strong? These rules, as John Mill says, "are as binding on communities as on individuals; and men are not warranted in doing to other countries, for the supposed benefit of their own country, what they would not be justified in doing to other men for their own benefit."

Sir James Stephen writes:—

"I do not admit that England, Russia, China, the Amír of Cabul, the Khan of Khelat, the Akhoond of Swat, the Nono of Spiti, and the Khan of Khiva, form an assemblage of practically equal moral persons, whose relations are to be discovered by consulting Grotius and his successors. Fictions cannot be stretched beyond a certain point. England, Russia, and China may treat on equal terms, but the other Rulers whom I have mentioned are simply the chief Rulers of clans, more or less extensive and

powerful, who, though not dependent upon us in the sense of any definite duties or allegiance to the Queen, must be dealt with on the understanding that they occupy a distinctly inferior position—their inferiority consisting mainly in this, that they are not to be permitted to follow a course of policy which exposes us to danger. This is the footing on which every State enclosed in the British dominions is practically treated. It appears to me that it is the only principle on which the adjacent Powers can be treated. Our relations with Sindia are, of course, different from our relations with the Amír of Cabul, as they are different from our relations with Holkar and the Nizam; but, at bottom, our relations with all of them stand on the same basis. They are all determined by the fact that we are exceedingly powerful and highly civilized, and that they are comparatively weak and half barbarous."

It is very convenient for this sort of argument to lump together powerful nations and insignificant states, and to drag in personages whose names, perhaps even in India, are not known to one man in a thousand unless specially connected with them. Who, until lately, except officers employed on the North-West frontier, or those whose official duty it is to supervise Indian affairs, could give you authentic information as to the power and position of the Akhoond of Swat?

And who is the Nono of Spiti? The very mention of such a potentate seems to throw a shade of ridicule over a very grave question. It was a source of amusement to frontier officers a few years ago, when the Supreme Government penned a despatch, intimating to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab that the penal code was to be introduced into the territories of the Nono of Spiti. The Lieutenant-Governor had a sketch made of this redoubtable potentate in his primitive costume, of a single cloth round his loins (commonly termed a langotí), with his plough on his shoulders, and his two little daughters carrying the seed, on their way to their agricultural labours. This sketch he sent into Government, and nothing more was heard of the introduction of the penal code. To place this head man of a wild valley in the Himalaya mountains, with an income of probably not more than three pounds a month, in the same category as the Amír of Cabul, requires great confidence in the ignorance of those to whom the argument was addressed.

Mr. Elphinstone writes that the Afghans appear to have been

entirely independent until the beginning of the seventeenth century. They then paid tribute to Persia; but at the commencement of the eighteenth century they conquered Persia, and established a short-lived Afghan dynasty, which was overthrown by Nadir Shah. In 1747, ten years before Clive won the battle of Plassey, Ahmed Shah Abdallee was crowned King of Cabul. Half-a-century later, one of the first political questions with which Lord Wellesley had to grapple, on his arrival at Calcutta, was the advisability of forming a defensive alliance between all the existing Powers of Hindostan, to resist an expected invasion of India by Zemaun Shah, King of Cabul.

On the 17th of June, 1809, the British Government concluded a treaty of alliance and co-operation with Shah Shuja. Then came the ill-omened tripartite treaty between Shah Shuja, Runjeet Sing, and the British Government, dated 20th July, 1838. On the 30th March, 1855, another treaty was made with the Amír, Dost Mahomed, on terms of perfect equality. There was no infringement of his independence, no implied understanding that he occupied a "distinctly inferior position," or the British officers entrusted with the negotiations might have found greater difficulty in bringing them to a favourable conclusion. Have we treaties of this nature with the Akhoond of Swat or with the Nono of Spiti? The principles put forward by Sir James Stephen are full of danger, and tend to destroy confidence in the good faith and fair dealing of the British Government. They would not have been tolerated in the days of the East India Company, and they would have found no favour in the eyes of the great Statesmen like Malcolm, Munro, and Elphinstone, who illustrated the Company's rule. It is not too much to say that those Statesmen never could have won their diplomatic triumphs in their dealings with Native States if such principles had guided their conduct. A distinguished member of the Council of India, Sir Erskine Perry, possessing a knowledge of Indian affairs, and, it may be added, of European politics, surpassed by few, thus records his protest against these principles:—

"I will only say, as a jurist, that I have been shocked at the doctrine

lately put forth by high legal authority, that the main principles of international law are not applicable to the East. Those principles are founded on large views of morality and justice, and if it is forbidden to a civilized Power in Europe to use poisoned weapons, to shell defenceless towns, to massacre or enslave prisoners, to invade a weak State because the possession of it would be convenient to the captor—according to my judgment these proceedings are equally forbidden to a civilized Power in Asia.”

This doctrine of the unlimited attributes of the British Government, as the paramount Power of India, to deal as it chooses not only with every Native State enclosed within its dominions, but also “with adjacent Powers,” to be, in fact, sole judge in its own cause when disputed questions arise, which are to be decided “according to its own interests,” was, soon after its promulgation, justly repudiated by Lord Northbrook, whose administrative ability, prudent, well-balanced mind, and long official training in the study and supervision of Indian affairs, pointed him out as one peculiarly fitted to preside over our Indian Empire. It is right to observe that Sir James Stephen subsequently explained and considerably modified the language of his first letter, and, to show his feelings about justice, quoted from a speech made by him in Calcutta, in which he says:—

“I believe that the real foundation on which the British power in this country stands, is neither military force alone, as some persons cynically assert (though certainly military force is one indispensable condition of our power); nor even that affectionate sympathy of the native population, on which, according to a more amiable, though not, I think, a truer view of the matter, some think our rule ought to rest (though it is hardly possible to overrate the value of such sympathy, where it can by any means be obtained). I believe that the real foundation of our power will be found to be an inflexible adherence to broad principles of justice, common to all persons, in all countries, and all ages, and enforced with unflinching firmness in favour of and against every one who claims their benefit, or who presumes to violate them, no matter who he may be.”

It is not intended to impute to Sir James Stephen any indifference to justice. But his original statement conveyed to such acute and practised minds as those of Lord Grey and of Lord Northbrook (and therefore, it may be supposed, to many European and Asiatic minds) a meaning utterly repugnant to that “affec-

tionate sympathy," to which he justly attaches so much value, and seemed to be a defence of high-handed principles of despotism, put forward for the sake of justifying our invasion of Afghanistan. The very fact of explanation being required demonstrates the necessity of caution, on the part of those capable of influencing the public mind. Opinions thus hastily given, which are liable to misconstruction, may lay the foundation of distrust and disaffection in the minds of the Chiefs and Princes of India. Even now the sting remains, and the doctrine is laid down, that with regard to the Native States of India, and to the adjacent Powers, no law nor rule exists to regulate the relations between them and the British Government but that which the British Government may, to the best of their judgment, deem most conducive to the happiness and lasting peace of its subjects and its neighbours, the grounds for this Imperial doctrine being that "none of them is strong enough or civilized enough to be really or permanently independent."

This is no new doctrine. In the days of annexation it was propounded, time after time, by those who supported the policy of absorbing the Native States, and bringing all Hindostan under British rule. But even Lord Dalhousie himself, whose Imperial proclivities were unmistakeable, in his minute of the 27th May, 1851, on the affairs of the Nizam, recorded his strong opinion in reprobation of so dangerous a doctrine. He writes:—

"I recognize no mission confided to the British Government which imposes upon it the obligation, or can confer upon it the right, of deciding authoritatively on the existence of native independent Sovereignities, and of arbitrarily setting them aside, whenever their administration may not accord with its own views, and although their acts in no way affect the interests or security of itself or its allies. Still less can I recognize any such property in the acknowledged supremacy of the British Government in India, as can justify its rulers in disregarding the positive obligations of international contracts, in order to obtrude on Native Princes and their people a system of subversive interference, which is unwelcome alike to people and to Prince."

It has been well observed that "the eternal principles of right and wrong should influence us in all parts of the world." The acts of England are not done in a corner. The eyes of all

nations are upon her. The millions of India are as sensitive to the infringement of the unalterable laws of justice as the more enlightened communities of Europe. Not only in Europe and in Asia, but even in Africa, deeds which redound to the credit or discredit of the British nation are discussed. Shortly after the unjust annexation of Sinde, Dr. Richardson, a traveller in Central Africa, relates the following circumstance :—

“The conversation was stopped by the entrance of a remarkable personage, the *quasi* Sultan of Ben Walid. Having heard that I was present, he said : ‘Christian, do you know Sinde?’ ‘Yes,’ I said. He then turned and said something to the people in the Ghadamsi language. I afterwards learned it was, ‘You see these Christians are eating up all the Mussulman countries.’ He then abruptly turned to me, ‘Why do the English go there, and eat up all the Mussulmans? afterwards you will come here.’ I replied, ‘The Amírs were foolish, and engaged in conspiracy against the English in India, but the Mussulmans in Sinde enjoyed the same privileges as the English themselves.’ ‘That is what you say,’ he rejoined; and then continued, ‘Why do you go so far from home to take other people’s countries from them?’ I replied, ‘The Turks do the same: they come to the desert.’ ‘Ay, you wish to be such oppressors as the Turks’ He then told me not to talk any more, and a painful silence continued for some time.”

But if bad deeds make their mark for evil, and cast discredit on the British name, good deeds exercise a sovereign influence for good, and pave the way for the blessings of civilization and Christianity in a manner little imagined by superficial observers of the course of events. The wisdom of British Statesmen, the heroism of British soldiers, the self-devotion of British missionaries, have all, under God, contributed to build up our magnificent Empire in the East. The moral force of individual character exercises unbounded sway over impulsive, half-civilized Asiatics. The line of demarcation is broken down between races, antagonism subsides, prejudices melt away, and it may be said of these benefactors of mankind, “Fragrance on their footing treads,” and their good deeds live after them. Outram won the hearts of the Bheels; Edwardes subjugated, without bloodshed, the wild tribes of the valley of Bunnoo. In the same manner the grandeur and simplicity of the character of Mountstuart Elphinstone created, as a native author states, “a most wonderful and noble

reversion of respect for the generosity, truth, and justice of the British nation in the minds of the Afghan Chiefs and people." Those who conversed with Afghans, forty and fifty years ago, can well remember the honour awarded to the name of "Ulfrish-teen," the traditions of whose splendid mission had been handed down from father to son amongst these wild but impressionable mountaineers.

Alas! the more bitter memories of the unfortunate Cabul expedition changed the currents of thought, and heaped up a wealth of hatred and execration on the British name in Afghanistan, while "disasters, unparalleled in their extent, unless by the errors in which they originated," seventeen millions of treasure wasted, thousands of lives fruitlessly expended, left traces in British recollections not to be wiped out even by the brilliant victories which restored the lustre of British arms. A long interregnum ensued, during which Afghanistan remained a sealed book to British influence, until, on the 30th March, 1855, a treaty was concluded with Dost Mahomed by Sir John Lawrence, under the instructions of Lord Dalhousie. Subsequently, in January 1857, in consequence of the war between England and Persia, an agreement was entered into with Dost Mahomed, by which he undertook to defend Herát against Persia; and for this purpose the British Government furnished him with money and arms.

It was Lord Canning's desire that these negotiations should be intrusted to Sir Herbert Edwardes, who, as Commissioner of Peshawur, had taken a leading part in bringing about a reconciliation with the Afghans. Lord Lawrence, in whose character magnanimity and self-abnegation are conspicuous, entertaining, as he did, the affection of a brother for Sir Herbert, and placing the highest value upon his ability and services, was quite willing to give way, although the conduct of negotiations of such moment would naturally have devolved upon him, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. But an unexpected obstacle arose to this arrangement. Dost Mahomed, with whom the name of John Lawrence was as a household word, would treat with no one else, and

refused to attend the meeting unless this was conceded. No doubt, besides the feeling of personal regard, there was the idea that his dignity would be compromised if he met an officer of inferior grade. These negotiations were therefore carried out by Lawrence and Edwardes, and the important consequences resulting from them were patent to all the world during the eventful years of the Sepoy mutiny, when a formidable inroad of Afghan hordes might have added greatly to our difficulties. It was at this meeting that the following affecting incident occurred :—

“See these coarse garments, said Dost Mahomed, opening his vest, how old and patched they are. Are these the proper robes for a ruling Prince? This shawl around my head is the sole piece of finery I possess. I have no money whatever. My sons and my Chiefs take everything I have. They leave me nothing, and they tear me into pieces with their dissensions. I live from hand to mouth among them, a life of expedients. I wish to Heaven that I could turn Faqueer, and escape from this heavy lot.”

Dost Mahomed remained our staunch friend until the day of his death, on the 9th of June, 1863. He had made himself master of Herát by a vigorous attack, not altogether unaided by the garrison, on the 27th of May. On the death of Dost Mahomed, Sher Ali commenced to rule, having been nominated heir-apparent some years before, on the demise of his brother, Gholam Hyder; but from the very beginning of his reign he met with determined opposition from a party headed by his elder brothers, Mahommed Afzal Khan and Mahommed Azim Khan. Then succeeded a revolutionary period in Afghanistan, lasting about five years, on which it is not necessary to dwell.

The Government of India, in accordance with the settled policy of the Government at home, kept aloof from any interference with Afghan internal affairs. Dost Mahomed himself counselled this line of action. “If you wish,” he said, “to be friends with the Afghans, beware of meddling with their intestine quarrels.” The object of the British Government was to leave the choice of a Ruler to the Afghan nation; the probability was that the most popular, the most able, and the most powerful of the Barukzye Chiefs, the fittest for the position, would gain the ascendancy. Ostensible British aid would not increase his popu-

larity. It might contribute to his temporary success, but it could not maintain him upon the throne without a continuous and exhausting drain of British resources, both of men and money. Moreover the proverbial fickleness and faithlessness of Afghan Chiefs would probably render him a broken reed very likely to pierce the hand in the hour of need. Except where their own interests are materially concerned, all history and all experience are against the notion that Afghan Rulers will ever prove "grateful and efficient allies." It must be recollected also that many of the acts of Sher Ali, though quite in accordance with the Afghan character, were not such as the British Government could approve. It was not at all improbable that he might have so conducted himself as to have estranged the majority of the Afghan Chiefs and people. If we had espoused his cause in the earlier part of the contest, we might have found ourselves supporting a tyrannical Ruler against the wishes of the Afghan nation. In 1868 Sher Ali finally established his authority in Afghanistan. The Viceroyalty of Lord Lawrence was then coming to an end; but one of his last acts before he quitted India was to enter into friendly relations with Sher Ali, by inviting him to a Durbar, and by promising to aid him with money and arms. The important letter of Lord Lawrence, of the 9th January, 1869, written on this occasion, shows the basis of our subsequent diplomatic relations with Sher Ali. Lord Lawrence writes :—

"I am leaving the country almost immediately, and am handing over the high office of Viceroy and Governor-General to my successor. But the policy which I have advisedly pursued with regard to the affairs of Afghanistan is one which I have entered on with anxious deliberation, and which has commanded the assent and approval of Her Majesty the Queen of England, and as long as you continue, by your actions, to evince a real desire for the alliance of the British Government, you have nothing to apprehend in the way of a change of policy, or of our interference in the internal affairs and administration of your kingdom."

Syed Noor Mahomed, at the conference with Sir Lewis Pelly, quotes passages from this letter,* and refers especially to Lord Lawrence's knowledge of "the circumstances of Afghanistan."

"Its good and evil were clearly known to him." He states

* p. 207.

expressly "the acquiescence and satisfaction of the Amír in the policy of Lord Lawrence and of Lord Mayo."

"Our opinion," he says, "is the same as that from the time of the late Amír and Lord Lawrence to the time of the Umballa Durbar, and till the arrival of the present Viceroy has always been mentioned in our past correspondence, and we are firmly of those opinions now. Therefore how can we consent to the addition of such hard conditions, the performance of which in Afghanistan will be impossible, as we can show by many proofs?"

These hard conditions were the location of British officers in Afghan territory, on which Lord Lytton peremptorily insisted. It was left to Lord Mayo, who succeeded Lord Lawrence on the 12th January, 1869, to carry out the arrangements with Sher Ali. Hence the Umballa Durbar which took place in March 1869. Sher Ali preferred a great many requests with which Lord Mayo did not think proper to comply. The object the Amír had chiefly at heart was the recognition of his son Abdulla Jan as his heir. To this the Viceroy would not listen, neither would he consent to make a Treaty offensive and defensive, nor grant a fixed subsidy; but he promised that British officers should not be stationed in Afghanistan, and on this point Sher Ali, like his father before him, laid the greatest stress. Not, perhaps, that he had personally so great an objection; but he knew well that such a concession on his part would do him harm in the eyes of his ignorant and fanatical Chiefs and people. The power of Afghan Rulers is never sufficiently stable to allow of their giving a handle to insurrectionary movements, especially in the direction of religious bigotry. Although disappointed in many respects, there is no doubt Sher Ali returned to Cabul from the Umballa Durbar more friendly to the British Government than before. Lord Mayo's princely courtesy and frank genial demeanour made a deep impression on the Barukzye Chief, and produced the happiest results. That this friendly feeling lasted until Lord Mayo's death, the touching letter Sher Ali wrote on the occasion of that mournful event sufficiently testifies. This letter was addressed to the Acting Viceroy. In it Sher Ali writes:—

"The unvarying friendship and kindness displayed towards me by

him who is now no more had induced me to determine, if the affairs of Afghanistan at the time permitted the step, to accompany His Excellency on his return to England, so that I might have obtained the gratification of a personal interview with Her Majesty the Queen, and derive pleasure from travelling in the countries of Europe. Before the eternally-predestined decrees, however, men must bow in silence."

No one can peruse this letter without the conviction that sympathy and right feeling are not wanting in the Amír's character, and that by wise forbearance and treatment he might have been moulded to our own purposes, and our relations with him placed upon a satisfactory footing. The defenders of Lord Lytton's policy have endeavoured to show that the estrangement of Sher Ali dates from a period much earlier than the Umballa Durbar. A certain feeling of resentment probably did at one time exist in his mind, because the British Government had not aided him in his contest for the throne. It is clear, however, from the tone of this letter, and from other evidence, that this feeling had almost entirely disappeared, owing to the measures initiated by Lord Lawrence, and carried out with such tact and judgment by Lord Mayo. Soon after the Umballa Durbar the mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to St. Petersburg occurred, and a lengthened diplomatic correspondence was commenced, which ended, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook, in the Russian Government accepting the definition of the territory of Afghanistan, as proposed by the Government of India, by which arrangement Sher Ali acquired a greater security with respect to the Northern boundary of his dominions than he had ever before possessed. It is desirable here to draw special attention to the wise step adopted by Mr. Gladstone's Administration, at the suggestion of Lord Lawrence's Government, in initiating these friendly negotiations. A frank interchange of the views of England and Russia on the affairs of Central Asia and Afghanistan ensued, which resulted in a distinct understanding that both Governments should exert all their influence to introduce peace and order into these troubled regions. The fruits of this good understanding were manifest on many occasions. We read, in Sir John Strachey's minute, dated 30th April, 1872:—

"To Russian influence in Bokhara was due the prompt withdrawal of a party of Bokhara troops who had crossed the Oxus in the winter of 1869. To the restraining hand kept by Russia on the Afghan refugees in Turkestan is to be attributed the absence of any attempt on their part to shake the throne of the Amír. When the most formidable of those refugees, Abdool Ruhman, once openly represented that it would be for the interest of Russia to assist him in conquering the throne of Cabul, General Von Kaufmann replied that hospitality had been afforded him on consideration of his destitute circumstances, and not as an enemy of England, or a pretender to the throne of Cabul. General Von Kaufmann himself, in the spring of 1870, commenced a direct correspondence, which has been renewed from time to time, and has conveyed to the Amír assurances of the neighbourly sentiments entertained by the Russian authorities towards the Afghan Government."

On being informed by Sher Ali of the first communication from General Kaufmann, Lord Mayo, on June 24th, 1870, wrote back to the Amír:—

"These letters will doubtless be, when rightly understood, a source of satisfaction and an additional ground of confidence to your Highness."

It does not appear from these extracts that the morbid dread of Russian machinations, which has led Lord Salisbury and Lord Lytton to depart from the wise policy of their predecessors, had at that time any influence on the minds of those intrusted with the Government of India.

Lord Mayo lost his valuable life, by the hand of a foul assassin, on the 8th of February, 1872. Lord Northbrook succeeded him on the 3rd of May, 1872. The most important incident connected with Afghanistan during the period of his Viceroyalty was the dispatch to Simla, in 1873, by Sher Ali of a Special Envoy, Syed Noor Mahomed Shah.

Alarmed at the fall of Khiva, the Amír sought more intimate relations with the British Government, and desired to ascertain how far he could rely on British aid in the event of his territories being threatened by Russia. His demands however, in the first instance, were so extravagant that it was impossible for Lord Northbrook to comply with them, more especially as Sher Ali was unwilling that Afghanistan should be called upon to make any return for the assistance rendered by the British Government. In fact, the Amír, professing to believe that our interests were as

much concerned or more so than his own, sought an unconditional guarantee of protection and very large payments of money for the fortification of his frontier and the equipment of his army.

Lord Northbrook very properly objected to these requests, which would have entailed unlimited responsibility and expenditure, without our being able to exercise any control over the course the Amír might choose to pursue. But Lord Northbrook was quite willing to give a guarantee with reasonable conditions attached to it, and ultimately he assured the Envoy that the British Government, in the event of any actual or threatened aggression, would assist the Amír "with arms and money, and also, in case of necessity, with troops." A letter to this effect was addressed by Lord Northbrook to the Amír, to which the "Record of Conversations" with the Envoy was appended. This record was a formal document officially communicated to the Envoy, and signed by him, and in Lord Northbrook's opinion was binding on the British Government. The Envoy doubting how far his instructions justified him in committing himself to any definite arrangement, it was considered desirable to postpone the final settlement to a more favourable opportunity, when so important a matter might be discussed with the Amír in person. That the Amír accepted this promise of assistance as a binding engagement on the part of Lord Northbrook, in the same manner as he accepted the letters and assurances of friendship and support from Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, is abundantly evident from the constant reference made to these assurances by Syed Noor Mahomed, at his conference with Sir Lewis Pelly.* The Envoy says:—"It is far from the welfare of States if there should be the possibility of objection to the promises made by such religious Governments, and such Ministers and Viceroy." Again:—"Therefore, I earnestly hope, for the welfare of the two Governments, that his Excellency the Viceroy, through your good offices, will with great frankness and sincerity of purpose act in conformity with the course of past Viceroys." And again, with mournful earnestness, he says:—"Your Government is a powerful and a great one, ours is a small and weak one. We have long

* p. 212.

been on terms of friendship, and the Amír now clings to the skirt of the British Government, and, till his hand be cut off, he will not relax his hold of it." But Lord Lytton, with the giant strength of British power at his back, is determined to press his obnoxious conditions, and is deaf to all other considerations. He does not even shrink from dealing with the acts and promises of his predecessors in a manner hitherto unknown in India, thus inflicting a serious blow on the confidence of every Native Prince in the assurances of Her Majesty's Representatives.

Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo, and Lord Northbrook had all given solemn promises in writing to the Amír; but, according to Lord Lytton, these were "only verbal understandings," as if formal official letters and written engagements were of no account unless embodied in definite treaties. Sir Lewis Pelly tells the Envoy:—"Your Excellency, however, appears to be under an impression that obligations and liabilities of this kind, though not contracted under treaty, have been none the less incurred by the British Government, through certain written and verbal assurances received by the Amír in 1869 from Lord Mayo, and by His Highness's Envoy from Lord Northbrook; this impression is entirely erroneous." It is of importance here to note that, in Lord Salisbury's Despatch of the 28th February, 1876, this verbal understanding of 1869 is spoken of as a "solemn and deliberate declaration approved by Her Majesty's advisers;" and it is admitted that, "to the Amír who had [received that declaration under circumstances of some solemnity and parade, it appears to have conveyed a pledge of definite action in his favour." In reference, also, to the declaration of Lord Northbrook, in 1873, Lord Salisbury writes:—"The terms of the declaration, however, although sufficient to justify reproaches on the part of Sher Ali, if, in the contingency to which it referred, he should be left unsupported by the British Government, were unfortunately too ambiguous to secure confidence or inspire gratitude on the part of His Highness." Lord Salisbury is pleased to characterize Lord Northbrook's declaration as "ambiguous," but the Amír himself did not so accept it, as His Highness's Envoy repeatedly affirmed. It was left to

Lord Lytton, and to Sir Lewis Pelly under Lord Lytton's instructions, to repudiate the written engagements of previous Viceroys. Sir John Malcolm's maxim, inculcated upon political officers in the olden time, was more generous and more worthy of the British Government:—"When any article of an engagement is doubtful, I think it should be invariably explained with more leaning to the expectations originally raised in the weaker than to the interests of the stronger Power." It is difficult to conceive anything more calculated to sow doubt and distrust in the minds of the Envoy and of the Amír than this conduct of Lord Lytton. Lord Northbrook has stated that "he endeavoured, to the best of his ability, to carry out the policy of Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, not only because he thought it right to carry on a successive policy, but because he entirely believed and concurred in that policy, and the reasons on which that policy was founded." In the conference with Sir Lewis Pelly, the Cabul Envoy affirmed that, from the time Lord Northbrook came to India to the time he left, although there were discussions on the subject, still he left the friendship without change, in conformity with the conduct of his predecessors, and with preceding usage.

Sir Henry Norman also writes:—

"My opinion was, and is, that up to the time of Lord Northbrook's departure the Amír had no feeling of hostility to us, though he was somewhat out of temper and was disquieted by writings which more or less pointed at measures distasteful to him. Any real resentment he may have subsequently shown is entirely due, according to my belief, to measures taken from April 1876 to the present time."

Lord Lytton succeeded to the Viceroyalty on the 12th of April, 1876, and agitating rumours began immediately to be circulated at home and abroad as to important changes about to be adopted in the policy that had hitherto been pursued on the North-West frontier, and in the management of our relations with the Amír of Cabul. Lord Lytton took to India Lord Salisbury's despatch of the 28th February, 1876, which prescribed a line of policy entirely opposed to that which had been carried out by previous Viceroys under instructions from successive Administrations at home. That policy had been pressed upon Lord North-

brook's Government, but weighty reasons had been given in opposition to it, showing the evils to which it would inevitably lead. Lord Salisbury himself, it would appear, had his misgivings, as he writes that, in case of "the irretrievable alienation of the Amír, no time must be lost in re-considering, from a new point of view, the policy to be pursued in reference to Afghanistan."

Lord Lytton, it is understood, kept this important despatch to himself for a considerable period without communicating its contents to his Council. It will be observed that it is addressed simply to the Governor-General of India, and not to the Governor-General in Council. According to law, the Government of India is vested in the Governor-General in Council, and it is not legal, nor has it hitherto been the practice, that the Governor-General should be recognized apart from his Council. This is, probably, one of the innovations alluded to by Sir Arthur Hobhouse, when he draws attention to Lord Salisbury's new mode of governing India. It may be further remarked, in reference to this despatch of the 28th February, 1876, which Lord Lytton carried to India, that, as far as can be discovered from the published correspondence, no reply to it was sent home until the 10th May, 1877.

During this long interval, when successive steps were being taken to inaugurate a complete change of policy, and when Parliament and the country were designedly kept in ignorance of the course of action pursued, the Government of India must have been carried on, as regards its foreign relations, in *demi-official* letters exchanged between Lord Salisbury and the Viceroy. This system of personal government may be in perfect accordance with the peculiar idiosyncrasies of Lord Salisbury and Lord Lytton; but the evils that are likely to flow from the exercise of unchecked authority by Viceroys and Ministers, and from the absence of due record and publicity, in such an important dependency as India, are patent to all who have studied the history of their country. John Mill writes:—

"The government of dependencies by a Minister and his subordinates, under the sole control of Parliament, is not a new experiment in

England. That form of Colonial Government lost the United States, and had nearly lost all the Colonies of any considerable population and importance."

Our proceedings on the frontier began at this time to excite interest in Europe, and various articles in the Continental Press drew attention to our dealings with the Khan of Khelat, and the apparently wider range of our general frontier policy. The following extract from *Le Temps* shows that, in these days of rapid communication and spread of intelligence through "our own correspondents," everything that takes place in India is made subject of comment, and its bearing upon European politics weighed and discussed. *Le Temps* writes:—

"Nos lecteurs auront sans doute remarqué dans les dépêches d'hier une nouvelle que la dernière lettre de notre correspondant de l'Inde faisait prévoir. Le gouvernement Anglo-Indien vient de signer avec le Khan de Kelate un traité qui recule les frontières militaires de l'Inde-Anglaise vers le Nord Ouest, ou en d'autres termes les rapproche de celles du Turkestan russe. La politique Indo-Anglaise rompt par cet acte avec des principes qu'elle professait depuis un assez grand nombre d'années. Elle s'était préoccupée à plusieurs reprises dans ces derniers temps de divers projets du genre de celui qui vient d'être adopté, et mis à exécution, mais une idée prévalait dans ses conseils, C'était que la domination Britannique ne devait pas être poussée au delà des limites atteintes. La politique opposée qui prend aujourd'hui le dessus, politique d'initiative, "spirited policy" disent les Anglais, n'aurait ni but, ni raison d'être, s'il ne fallait y voir le témoignage d'une méfiance en éveil et le programme même de précautions que l'Angleterre juge indispensables pour déjouer d'avance les plans supposés de la Russie, sa voisine dans l'Asie Centrale. L'envoi d'un Resident Anglais à Caboul pour surveiller l'Emir accusé d'intriguer avec les Russes paraît décidé. Ces mesures qui sont interprétées à Moscow et à Saint Petersburg dans un sens défavorable n'ont pas l'approbation de tout le monde en Angleterre. On fait valoir notamment contre l'occupation armée de nouveaux territoires, outre les considérations d'économie des raisons politiques et militaires dont la moins spécieuse n'est pas que le meilleur moyen de rendre service de son ennemi, c'est d'aller à son rencontre, parceque cela lui épargne la moitié du chemin."

Had Lord Northbrook remained at the head of affairs in India, his measures would have been understood to have been directed solely to the settlement of the Khelat disputes, to the protection of the commercial traffic through the Bolan Pass, and to the pacification of the Belooch tribes in that vicinity. They

would neither have given rise to any distrust or apprehension on the part of the Amir of Cabul, nor would they have afforded any grounds for the belief, that we were taking the first step to throw down the gauntlet to Russia, and were preparing for a further advance, with a view to the rectification of our North-Western frontier. But Lord Lytton made no secret of his ultimate intentions, nor of the Imperial scope of the policy which he had come out to India to inaugurate. Afghanistan must be brought within British influence; to this end British officers must be stationed in Afghan cities, and to use his own words, "having regard to probable contingencies in Central Asia," frontier affairs must henceforth be regulated with a view to more important objects than the temporary prevention of plunder on the British border."

Here we have a distinct change of policy enunciated, and the object declared without reserve, that object being the rectifying of the British frontier, to counteract the advance of Russia in Central Asia. This departure from a line of policy which the British Government had pursued for so many years was contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of our understanding with the Russian Government, and as the writer in *Le Temps* says, could have no possible aim or reason except as a countermove and measure of precaution against the supposed designs of Russia. The Russian Government had several times assured England that "Afghanistan was outside the sphere of Russian action." We learn from Sir John Strachey's minute, and Lord Northbrook has confirmed the statement, that Russia had shown on many occasions that it had "no desire to depart from its engagements in that matter." Of course this compact could exist only on the supposition that England and Russia continued on terms of amity, and that England herself preserved her neutral attitude.

When the discussions in Europe assumed a threatening aspect, and native troops were brought from India, and when all sorts of rumours were afloat in reference to the hostile intentions of England, Russia naturally felt absolved from her tacit understanding. We must look at these matters from a Russian as well as from

an English point of view. Russia is as jealous and suspicious of us as we are of her, and is as much entitled to take precautions with regard to her possessions in Central Asia as we are with regard to India. The warlike preparations of Lord Lytton on the banks of the Indus, which alarmed the Amír of Cabul, were currently reported to be preparatory to a movement, through Afghanistan, upon the dominions of Russia in the countries beyond the Oxus. What did General Skobeleff say to Colonel Brackenbury?—

“I cannot make out what has become of that column of ten thousand men, organized by your people to raise Central Asia against us.”

As in Russia, so in England there is a class of people, gifted with facile pens and fertile imaginations, who are constantly employed in sounding the alarm, and prognosticating evil results from the advance and progress of what they are pleased to term rival nations. France, America, Russia, at different intervals, have come under this category. These men, while loud in their professions of patriotism, by fostering a spirit of antagonism, and pandering to national prejudices, are the worst enemies of their country, the real substantial interests of which depend mainly on the continuance of peace, and on the cultivation of friendly relations with all the world. Every thoughtful Englishman must lament the bitter state of feeling against Russia which pervades England at the present moment, and all who estimate aright the dreadful calamities a conflict would entail on both countries must desire to remove any causes of misunderstanding which would tend to precipitate such a catastrophe. There may not be any danger of immediate collision, but the worst feature of our present policy in Europe and in Asia is that it enlarges the area of prospective antagonism, and is pregnant with future mischief.

The real questions are, were the proceedings of Russia in Central Asia, including the dispatch of General Stolietoff's Mission to Cabul, such as to give England just cause of serious complaint? Have the explanations afforded by Russia been of a character to satisfy the British Government? We have the statement of the Prime Minister that, looking to the strained

relations that existed between England and Russia at a certain not very distant period, the expedition which Russia was preparing in Central Asia at that time, with which the Mission to Cabul was connected, was perfectly allowable. Lord Salisbury also is quite contented to accept the explanations of M. de Giers, and takes for granted that "all the former assurances of the Russian Government in regard to Afghanistan have now recovered their validity." Russia is therefore entirely absolved, and Lord Beaconsfield declares her conduct to have been "very satisfactory;" but he adds:—

"After all that had occurred it was totally impossible for us to leave things as they were; you could not go on after you had found Russian armies almost in sight of Cabul, and an Embassy within its walls; you could not go on on the old system. It was absolutely necessary to consider what course should be taken."

It is to employ somewhat figurative language, to speak "of Russian armies almost in sight of Cabul," but it was necessary to make out a case of British interests in jeopardy. It was politic to accept the explanations of Russia, but a danger had been disclosed against which it was imperative to provide. Whether that danger was real or unreal, or whether, if real, it was best met by the course adopted, are the points at issue. In pursuance, however, of his object, the obligations of justice, of reciprocal treaties, and of the rights of an independent nation to preserve its freedom, which it had enjoyed for hundreds of years, were apparently of small moment to Lord Beaconsfield. In a similar spirit Prince Bismarck, on the occasion of the annexation of Hanover, declared "that to attend to like considerations would be to substitute the superficial for the essential, and that his objects must be carried through by blood and iron. Upon those who venture to remonstrate against such imperial doctrines, Lord Beaconsfield strives to affix the stigma "of peace at any price advocacy," and backed by his present large majorities in both Houses of Parliament, he is enabled to snatch a temporary triumph; but it remains to be seen whether, when the whole case is before the country, this verdict will be confirmed.

Mr. Burt, the honest and able representative of the working classes in the House of Commons, stated :—

“He had many opportunities of ascertaining the feelings of the working classes, and he did not know a single man who believed that we were right in this war. He had not met with any working man who did not believe that we were engaged in an unjust and cowardly war.”

The instincts of the working men of England, in favour of justice and fair play, are as strong and as true as of many of those who, by the accidents of outward position, exercise a more authoritative voice in determining the policy of the country. Lord Canning, when he set his face like a flint against the ravenous cry for blood, and earned, to his immortal honour, what was then considered by the unthinking many, the opprobrious epithet of “Clemency Canning,” lived to witness the revulsion in his favour ; and the illustrious names of Gladstone and of Lawrence, in common with hundreds of England’s most distinguished citizens, can afford to fling back with scorn the “peace at any price” stigma sought to be cast upon them by Lord Beaconsfield. It may be stated, once for all, that those who are the foremost in condemning the injustice and impolicy of the present Afghan war, would be the first, in the event of unprovoked aggression by Russia, or by any other Power, to advocate the putting forth the whole strength and resources of England to avert any real danger from our Indian Empire.

The conduct of Russia having been so “very satisfactory,” according to Lord Beaconsfield, where was the necessity of driving Sher Ali into a corner, so that he could not but stand at bay, or lose his influence with the ignorant and fanatical tribes over whom he exercised a precarious sway ? Was the danger to India so pressing and imminent that we were obliged to act “with breathless haste?” to use Sher Ali’s expression. We learn from Lord Northbrook that when he left India, “though Sher Ali would have disliked any interference on the part of England, he would have disliked any shown on the part of Russia to a far greater extent.” Sir Henry Norman confirms this statement. What induced Sher Ali’s change of feeling ? It was owing to the various measures adopted by Lord

Lytton, which, step by step, were inevitably leading up to the present calamitous war. This was foreseen by the most experienced members of Lord Lytton's Council, while those best conversant with Indian affairs at home watched the progress of events with undisguised alarm. Under this aspect the subject was brought before both Houses of Parliament, in order to elicit explanations from the Ministers who are primarily responsible for our Indian policy. Before the attempt is made to trace the successive measures adopted by Lord Lytton, which have culminated in the present disastrous results, it will be important to point out the nature of the Ministerial explanations which have proved so much at variance with the real facts of the case. It will be advisable also to state clearly the distinctive features of the past and present policy in reference to the North-Western frontier of India.

On the 9th of August, 1877, in answer to Mr. Grant Duff, Sir Stafford Northcote spoke thus :—

“ My honourable friend, the member for the Elgin Burghs, with the knowledge he has, and the clearness with which he always speaks on these subjects, speaks of two schools in respect to this frontier question, the one which is called the forward policy, and the opposite school which is rather for looking back, and not committing ourselves to advancing beyond our frontiers. Well, I have, as my honourable friend reminded us, always leant to the policy of the second of those schools. I have always demurred to the idea, which has been put forward by some, that the best way to meet danger is to advance beyond our own frontier; and I have always maintained that the true lines we ought to lay down for ourselves are those to strengthen ourselves within our own frontiers, and to do so by a combination of measures moral and material.”

Then, after giving a rapid sketch of the measures that commended themselves to his judgment, Sir Stafford added :—

“ In all these views, which I have been always led to hold, as to the best mode of protecting India from direct attack, I believe there is no change whatever in the policy of Her Majesty's Government.”

Lord Salisbury spoke to the same effect, in answer to the Duke of Argyll, in the House of Lords. Sir Stafford Northcote, having himself filled the office of Secretary of State for India, must have been well aware that, for years past, there have been two antagonistic schools of opinion, with reference to the policy to

be pursued on our North-Western frontier. He must have had before him the recorded views of all the eminent servants of the Government on both sides of this much vexed question. He must have studied and weighed these views, and having come to deliberate conclusions, he must have brought them before the Cabinet of which he was a member, and then, as the organ of that Cabinet in regard to the affairs of India, he must have embodied the decision of himself and his colleagues in the various despatches transmitted to the Viceroy. Sir Stafford Northcote, therefore, speaks with authority upon a question with which he is familiar, on which he has had the best opportunity of forming a correct judgment, and in the right decision of which the most important results to India and to England are involved. There is no doubt also that the views he expresses have been held and acted upon by successive Administrations, through a long series of years, and have been recommended and enforced by all the eminent Viceroys from Lord Dalhousie to Lord Northbrook. What then is the policy which has received the sanction of so many distinguished Statesmen, both at home and in India, which has been acquiesced in with satisfaction by the British nation generally, and from which Lord Lytton has been the first to depart, in obedience to instructions from the Ministry who appointed him to the Viceroyalty? It is not, as one of its opponents states, in an elaborate article, written in defence of Lord Lytton, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, of August 1877, "absolute inaction within, and indifference without, the border." It is not, as a distinguished officer, Sir Henry Havelock, wrote in a letter to the *Daily News*, "to do nothing, sit still, fold your arms, let matters glide, and let us hope that it will all come right in the end." It is not a timid, hesitating, half-hearted policy, blind to the march of events, ignoring possible dangers, wrapped in a fool's paradise, without prevision of the future, or apprehension of any change of circumstances which might necessitate modifications, or even an entirely new course of action. Its main features are delineated in the following pregnant paragraphs of Lord Ellenborough's proclamation of 1st October, 1842 :—

"Content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its Empire, the Government of India will devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace; to the protection of the Sovereigns and Chiefs, its allies; and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects. The rivers of the Punjab and Indus, and the mountainous passes and barbarous tribes of Afghanistan, will be placed between the British army and an enemy approaching from the west, if, indeed, such enemy there can be, and no longer between the army and its supplies. The enormous expenditure required for the support of a large force in a false military position, at a distance from its own frontier, and its resources, will no longer arrest every measure for the improvement of the country and of the people. The combined army of England and of India, superior in equipment, in discipline, in valour, and in the officers by whom it is commanded, to any force which can be opposed to it in Asia, will stand in unassailable strength upon its own soil, and for ever, under the blessing of Providence, preserve the glorious Empire it has won in security and honour."

These paragraphs sketch in broad outline the frontier policy adopted at that date, and persevered in until Lord Lytton's accession to the Viceroyalty. No doubt, in the thirty-six years that have elapsed since that period, vast changes have taken place. England and Russia have advanced to meet each other across the continent of Asia with giant strides. As Sir Robert Peel stated in the debate of June 23rd, 1842, "between civilized nations and nations very much their inferior there is a great tendency in the former to extend their empire in order to give security to what they possess." England on her part has added to her dominions the country of the Amirs of Sinde, a conquest designated by Sir Henry Pottinger as "the most unprincipled and disgraceful that ever stained the annals of our Empire in India." Sir James Outram also spoke of it "as most tyrannical, positive robbery." Colonel Meadows Taylor writes:—"I do not believe that Lord Ellenborough ever desired the conquest or annexation of Sinde; but he was in the hands of a man who, led on by personal unscrupulous ambition and daring, formed, as it appears to me, from the beginning, the resolution of displacing the Amirs, and regarding its strategic importance of converting Sinde into a British province." In the *Contemporary Review* of November 1876, Mr. Gladstone states:—"The organization of the Empire (Russian), efficient for many purposes, does not appear

to secure effective control from the head over the more distant members. At different periods our own Central Government has had occasion to feel the insufficiency of its restraining force. A notable example occurred in 1843, when Sinde was conquered by Napier, under the auspices of Lord Ellenborough. That conquest was disapproved, I believe, unanimously by the Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel, of which I can speak, as I had just entered it at that time. But the Ministry were powerless, inasmuch as the mischief of retaining was less than the mischief of abandoning it, and it remains an accomplished fact." This weakness of the extremities is, as Burke writes, "the eternal law of extension and detached empire." It is scarcely needful to point the moral of this incident to the case of Khiva. Russia has her Kaufmanns, as we have our Napiers.

In 1848 we conquered the Punjab, the land of the five rivers, with its area of 95,768 square miles, and its population of 17,500,000 souls. In 1856 the fertile and flourishing kingdom of Oude was brought under British sway. In striking contrast to these rich acquisitions of territory it is curious to read Mr. Schuyler's account of the Russian possessions in Central Asia. He writes:—

"Central Asia has no stores of wealth, and no economical resources; neither by its agricultural, nor by its mineral wealth, nor by its commerce, nor by the revenue to be derived from it, can it ever repay the Russians for what it has already cost, and for the rapidly-increasing expenditure bestowed upon it." Again—"Of the whole of Russian Central Asia (excluding the late annexed Kyzilkum desert), only $1\frac{8}{10}$ per cent. is cultivable, which speaks plainly as to the value of the recently-acquired possessions." Again—"Owing to the actual insufficiency of the local production, most of the grain for army use has to be brought from Vierny, Kopal, and Southern Siberia."

A well-informed writer, in the *Quarterly Review*, of January 1879, states:—

"Russian Turkestan, notwithstanding its great extent, is not in any point of view, in productiveness, in trade, in population, or in military power, to be compared with one single province of the Punjab."

In addition to the Punjab and Oude, year after year witnessed the annexations of Sattarah, Jhansi, Nagpore, Pegu, and other small Native States. Lord Dalhousie thus announced his policy:—

"It is my strong and deliberate opinion that, in the exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British Government is bound not to neglect or put aside such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may, from time to time, present themselves." Although there is no case so flagrant as that of the unfortunate Amírs of Sind, yet, weighed in the scales of justice, some of the annexations under the rule of Lord Dalhousie will scarcely be deemed by impartial judges to merit the designation of "rightful." It behoves an Englishman, therefore, "to cast out the beam out of his own eye, and then he will see more clearly to cast out the mote out of his brother's eye." While England was gradually absorbing native kingdoms and principalities in the Indian peninsula, and pushing forward her territories to the great mountain border line beyond the Indus, Russia was overrunning large tracts of country in Central Asia, and subduing Mohammedan States, where tyranny and misrule prevailed to an extent, equalled perhaps, but never surpassed, in the history of the world.

What British heart does not throb with indignation at the recollection of the sufferings of Stoddart and Conolly in the dungeons of the fiendish Nasiroollah Khan, Amír of Bokhara, who reigned from 1826 to 1860? The common saying was, "In Bokhara nobody knows what is to be done, to-day you are alive, to-morrow they behead you." One of Nasiroollah's last acts was to order the execution of his wife. "The executioner tied her hands, and shot her with a pistol in the back of her head.* He did not kill her at once; she fell, and struggled for some time. The executioner kicked her twelve times on her breast and back till she died." Vambéry states "that she was executed close to the dying Amír, and the abominable tyrant breathed his last with his glazing eye fixed upon the gushing blood of the sister of his detested enemy." What a picture Mr. Schuyler gives of another Ruler, Khadayar Khan, of Khokand:—"Under him, neither virtue nor life was safe." "By the wholesale butchery of 20,000 Kiptchaks he excited the hatred of his subjects."

* Schuyler, Vol. I. p. 97.

As a contrast to these Rulers, Sir Bartle Frere writes thus of the Rajah of Sattarah :—"The late Rajah having been a liberal and humane, a just and popular, Ruler, any supposed want of equity in the appropriation of his dominions will lack the popularity which a similar measure, whatever its grounds, would always find amongst the industrious and peaceful inhabitants of a State delivered from anarchy and oppression." In spite of the remonstrances of Sir Bartle Frere, and of other eminent men, Sattarah, a model of good native administration, fell a victim to the dominant passion of annexation, which then prevailed in Indian councils.

Not to enlarge more on this branch of the subject, sufficient to say that, exemplifying the truth of Sir Robert Peel's statement thirty-six years ago, instead of the two Empires of England and Russia being divided by half the continent of Asia, there is now intervening between their political frontiers a mere narrow strip of territory a few hundred miles across. By the force of circumstances, as some would say, but rather under the control of a Higher Power, who mysteriously works out His own purposes known from the beginning, through the instrumentality of war, and who regulates all things to subserve one great end, step by step two mighty Christian nations seem to be closing in upon the Mohammedan kingdoms of the world, and bringing them under Christian domination.

There is no foundation for the oft-reiterated assertion that the various Indian Governments which preceded Lord Lytton were blind to the results that might flow from the gradual advance of the Russians in Central Asia. In his despatches of the 3rd of September, 1867, and of the 4th of January, 1869, Lord Lawrence draws the attention of the Home Government to this question, and suggests the course to be pursued. But the proceedings of Russia were not viewed through an exaggerated medium; they were not regarded with a petty selfish reference to British interests alone, but under the broader aspect of the benefits that would accrue to mankind generally by the substitution of a great Christian and improving Government in lieu of the oppression and barbarity of Mohammedan tyrants.

In the same spirit, Sir Herbert Edwardes wrote twenty years ago, "Can anyone say that to substitute Russian rule for the anarchy and manstealing of Khiva, the dark tyranny of Bokhara, and the nomad barbarism of Khokand would be anything but a gain to mankind?"

England has preceded Russia in her mission of introducing civilization and Christianity into Asia, and, in spite of many drawbacks and shortcomings, her rule has been a beneficent one, and she has given order, and security for life and property, and respect for law, where formerly anarchy and misrule for the most part prevailed. Our conquests have been generally the result of unforeseen circumstances, and frequently carried out against the express orders of the Home authorities. There was no settled policy of territorial aggrandizement. In the pursuit of commercial advantages the East India Company from an insignificant factory built up a magnificent Empire, and bequeathed it as a legacy to the Crown. Wherein lies the great difference between the conduct of Russia and that of our own country? Even admitting that the impelling force is stronger in Russia, including as it does the religious element, and that the restraining force is less powerful and persistent, from the absence of free discussion, and independence of thought and action, still, without having recourse to the apocryphal Will of Peter the Great, every thoughtful reader of history will recognize the same causes which underlie the advance both of England and Russia, and in like manner forbid retrogression.

Is it then for England with her Colonies and possessions, and vantage strongholds snatched from other nations in all quarters of the globe, to arrogate the right to say to another great nation, "Thus far thou shalt go, and no further"? Would England herself submit to such dictation? Why should England look at these questions only in the light of a jealous rival of Russia, watching each movement with jaundiced eye, putting the most unfavourable construction on every act, and thus creating a state of angry feeling which must inevitably, sooner or later, lead to collision, and thereby entail immeasurable evil on both countries?

In a despatch of Lord Mayo, dated June 3rd, 1870, he

recognizes the fact of England and Russia having "a common mission in Asia, namely, the establishment of good government and the civilization of the mighty nations committed to their care," and recommends a course of action which Sir Henry Rawlinson pronounces to be "thoroughly unselfish," but "hardly practical." Would to heaven that British policy with regard to this question could at all times have merited the epithet of "thoroughly unselfish." There is little doubt that eminently practical results would have followed. But then the unselfishness must have been real, without spot or blemish, patent to the world. There must have been no secret conventions, no sharp practice, no attempt to over-reach other nations. Lord Carnarvon told us recently that the old jealousies and sources of irritation between England and America had died away; and how has this been brought about? "By the right intention of each Government, and by the exercise of tact, judgment, good feeling and sense, on the part of their representatives."

Alas! such is not the position of England and Russia. To the hindrance of progress, to the misfortune of mankind, to the opprobrium of our common Christianity, these two mighty nations, with no conflicting interests, no conceivable reason why they should interfere with each other, have drifted into an antagonistic attitude fraught with the direst evils to themselves and to the world.

Let it be admitted that there are classes in all countries which, from ignorance, inertness, or interested motives, are blind to the tremendous consequences and calamities of war. Still, the government of the world is not carried on by these classes. Rulers and Statesmen, it may be charitably supposed, are actuated by higher impulses, and have a deeper sense of their responsibilities. Attila, Tamerlane, Nadir Shah, and Napoleon have passed away, and have left the brand of infamy attached to their names in the world's annals. Can it be believed that Russian Rulers and Russian Statesmen, in defiance of all laws human and divine, are bent on a settled and deliberate course of territorial aggrandizement? Is it credible that the Czar, with whom the chief power rests in such

matters, like the Oriental Despot held up to execration in the burning words of Burke, "resolves, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capable of such things, to compound all the materials of fury, havock, and desolation into one black cloud, to pour down the whole of its contents" on the peaceful and fertile plains of India?

Russia has ample work before her for a long time to come, to apply a healing salve to the bleeding pores of her wide-spread territory, to allay internal disorder, to restore her impoverished finances, and to consolidate her conquests in Central Asia. But, of course, if England adopt towards her an irritating policy in Europe and in Asia; if so many English pens, dipped in gall, constantly hold her up to scorn and indignation, and sow hatred broadcast between the two nations, but one result can follow. Years ago, Montalembert wrote:—"L'insupportable arrogance de la diplomatie Anglaise envers les faibles, et de la presse Anglaise envers tout le monde, a soulevé la juste indignation d'une foule d'honnêtes gens." There are noble exceptions in the English press, but their voice is drowned in the general chorus of exciting language and indiscriminating abuse.

Granting, however, the fact, that Russia means mischief, what course ought England to pursue? We should not, I presume, "idly and stupidly gazing on the menacing meteor," fold our arms, sit still, and let matters glide. We should prepare to meet the danger. We should, in fact, have been in a state of preparation long before the crisis. There is not the smallest probability of Russia being able to steal a march upon us, so as to take us unawares. The measures of defence to be adopted would depend on the nature of the attack; the whole strength of the British Empire would be put forth to maintain the security of our Indian dominions. There is no difference of opinion on this vital point between the advocates of a forward policy and the supporters of the opposite school. The only question is as to the means by which this end is to be sought.

Until lately the Governments at home and in India have held

the opinion of Sir Robert Peel, when he stated :—" Whatever may be the conduct of Russia, I believe that the Governments of England and of India are sufficiently powerful to protect themselves. I do not think that we are, as a nation, dependent on the co-operation or good faith of Russia or of any other Power." These few words contain the germ of a great truth, which it would be well if England's Ministers of the present day, and England's citizens, would take to heart. We need no entangling alliances with unknown future responsibilities as a bulwark to India or to any other portion of British territory. England relies upon herself; in quietness and confidence is her strength. She seeks not to give offence, and is not easily provoked; but, while apparently passive, she silently concentrates her power, and is not the less ready in a just cause, if, unhappily, such cause should arise, to defend her rights, and to preserve unsullied the rich inheritance of fame and dominion transmitted to her from her forefathers. In the case of undoubtedly aggressive measures on the part of Russia in regard to India, England would not hesitate to accept the challenge; but the main brunt of the shock of conflict would not be on the banks of the Indus, but in Europe; and God forbid that the necessity should arise for such a gigantic trial of strength between the two nations. To avert this calamity, the greatest wisdom, prudence, and forbearance on the part of the Statesmen and representatives of Russia and England are imperatively required; and herein lies the essential distinction between the advocates of what Sir Stafford Northcote designates "the forward policy" and the policy pursued up to Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty by the British Government.

It is now time to ask, What is this forward policy? How did it originate? by whom has it been chiefly advocated? Let us endeavour to trace its rise, progress, and development in the recorded opinions of its chief supporters. Foremost in the controversy we have two distinguished servants of the Indian Government, Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir Bartle Frere; Major-General Jacob, however, preceded them in the field, a born soldier, with true military instincts, but not

on that account best fitted to determine a great political question. His suggestions towards the permanent defence of the North-West frontier were submitted for the consideration of Government five and twenty years ago. "The Queen of England formally to assume the style and title of Empress of India" was one of his recommendations, and his policy may well be called an Imperial policy, requiring Imperial resources. He states that "England committed an egregious error in not driving every Russian back to the Caucasian range," a task more easily spoken of than accomplished. He was a strong advocate for the advance to Quettah; and having occupied that post, and located a large force there, he would under certain circumstances, have subsidized all Afghanistan with money and arms. In a previous minute he had stated that "the Afghans were utterly faithless and untrustworthy, that he never even admitted one of their nation into the ranks of the force he commanded." Further, "looking onward to a great European war, he would garrison Herát with 20,000 men, which would not necessarily, he stated, cause any increase to our Indian army, or at least to its cost." It may be here observed that it is a favourite argument with the advocates of a forward policy, that our military expenses would not be increased, as the garrisons and troops stationed in Sind and the Punjab might be diminished, and an improved frontier line obtained with little additional outlay. The same argument was put before the Russian Government. Mr. Schuyler tells us:—"It was said that the diminished expenses of Orenburg and Western Siberia would furnish sufficient funds for the Government of Central Asia, but it was found that the expenses of Orenburg and Western Siberia had rather increased than diminished." After specifying other details, General Jacob concludes:—"Unless these and other subsidiary arrangements are speedily applied, and manfully carried out, our Indian Empire will be lost within the next generation of men." In reference to General Jacob's recommendations, Sir Herbert Edwardes, to say the least, an equally eminent authority, wrote at the time:—"So vast a pile of impracticable schemes seems more like some dream of conquest

than a sober system of Imperial defence. The meaning of distances, the necessity of support, the physical difficulties of countries, the moral difficulties of races, past experience of them all, the future outlay involved, and present financial position of India, seem alike defied or ignored in such astounding speculations."

Sir Henry Rawlinson, a disciple of Sir John McNeill, is the most powerful and persistent advocate of the forward policy. His views are stated at length in his book, "England and Russia in the East," which he published as a sort of manual for students of the Eastern question. It is indeed a mine of information on all questions connected with Central Asia and the North-West frontier of India. But it is written entirely from the standpoint of a thorough, and doubtless sincere, conviction of Russian intrigue, perfidy, and settled purpose of territorial aggrandizement, undertaken with the ultimate object of hostile designs upon our Indian dominions. Sir Henry writes :—"I take some credit to myself that at so early a period as 1865 I forecasted the development of Russian power very much as it has since occurred, and I then suggested the policy to which I now recur, of proceeding on the approach of real danger to man the outposts of our Indian Empire at Herát and Candahar, in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy." "Real danger." A great deal depends upon the interpretation put upon these words. Lord Sandhurst, a man eminently qualified for the task as a soldier and statesman, with large Indian and European experience, controverted Sir Henry Rawlinson's views in an article which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of July 1875. He had previously, as Commander-in-Chief in India, recorded his dissent from Sir Henry Rawlinson's memorandum on the Central Asian question, dated 20th July, 1868, which had been forwarded to India by order of the Secretary of State. All the other members of the Indian Government, which it may be remarked was at that time exceptionally strong in ability and in Indian experience, expressed, at great length, their deliberate judgment upon this memorandum. The opinions also of officers holding high employ-

ment on the North-West frontier were collected and sent home with the minutes of the Government to the Duke of Argyll as accompaniments to the Government despatch of the 4th January, 1869, of which it will be sufficient to quote the two following paragraphs:—

“The various proposals brought forward in that memorandum, in order to counteract in some measure the advances of Russia in Central Asia, and to strengthen the influence and power of England in Afghanistan and Persia, have received from us that careful consideration which is due to the well-known career and abilities of the writer, and to the magnitude of the events and interests of which he has treated. A careful perusal of the memorandum forwarded to us, and a further discussion of the subject in all its bearing, has not led us to recommend any substantial alteration in the course of policy to be adopted on the frontier or beyond it. On the contrary, the closer and more constant the attention which the subject receives at our hands, the more settled is our conviction that any serious departure from the principles which we have already enunciated would be the cause of grave political and financial embarrassments, and would probably involve us in doubtful undertakings, the issue and duration of which no Statesman would venture to predict.”

To one who has been associated with Sir Henry Rawlinson in public life, and who has always entertained a high opinion of his ability, industry, and rare knowledge on all topics connected with the East, but has still felt it his duty to oppose his views, it is matter of surprise, and it may be added sorrow, to find that, in spite of the overwhelming weight of authority which so long resisted his forward policy, as unsound and dangerous, that policy has at length obtained the ascendancy in the Councils of the British Empire. It is to be hoped that Sir Henry and the abler advocates of his side of the question will be moderate in their triumph, and give no countenance to the schemes of annexation, and large extension of frontier, which find support in many quarters, and which it is understood Lord Lytton favours. Sir Henry Rawlinson has himself denounced “the iniquity of extinguishing independent States for the mere purpose of obtaining a convenient line of territorial demarcation.” On every question connected with Persia, Sir Henry Rawlinson speaks with high authority; but his suggestion, that it would be better for England to meet Russia (coming as an invader of India) in Persia rather

than upon our Indian frontier, Lord Sandhurst pronounces to be "one of the wildest which ever crossed the imagination of a military diplomatist labouring under a fixed idea."

Sir Henry Rawlinson would also make the Russian advance to Merv a *casus belli*. He writes:—"So long as she held aloof from Merv we should hold aloof from Herát; but if she deliberately threw down the gauntlet, she must expect it to be taken up." He attaches paramount importance to Herát, as the key to India, and considers that an expeditionary column detached from India to hold it need not exceed a strength of 10,000 men, 5,000 only being allotted to the garrison of Herát, the remainder for the occupation of Gerishk, Furrah, Candahar, Quettah, and Pisheen.

Lord Sandhurst considered this force too small to occupy so many forts, and protect such a long line of operations. In order to subdue a single tribe of Afghans, General Wilde, an experienced frontier officer, demanded 20,000 men. In the Umbeyla expedition in 1863, we lost 36 British officers, and 871 British and native soldiers killed and wounded. It should be recollected that convoys, with supplies and munitions of war for the troops, must constantly be passing to and fro, exposed to attacks from hostile tribes, and that, at such a distance from our base, provision must be made for unwonted sickness, which very often in these countries greatly reduces the strength of regiments. Lord Sandhurst estimated the force required at 31,000, instead of 10,000 troops, and the number deemed necessary for our present advance into Afghanistan exceeds even this larger estimate.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, however, professed to believe that we should be able to carry out the policy he recommended in concert with the Afghans and with the Amír; but he was prepared for the other alternative, as he added:—

"Of course if the perversity of the Amir were to continue, and he were inclined to thwart the expedition, from feelings of jealousy, or from a mistrust of our intentions, the difficulties of the march would be much increased, and our preparations would require to be made upon a larger scale, including, perhaps, a demonstration at the mouth of the Khyber; but under no circumstances need the expeditionary column, as far as I can form an opinion, exceed a strength of 10,000 men."

With regard to the occupation of Quettah, Sir Henry Rawlinson also assumed that we had the concurrence of the Amír, and his language deserves to be weighed in reference to the causes that have led to the present war:—

“It is doubtful,” he writes, “how far such a proceeding would be regarded at Candahar and Cabul. If our position were already secured with Sher Ali Khan, and he could thus be led to look upon the Quettah post as a support to his own power, then we should hardly be deterred from undertaking it by mere considerations of expense; but if, as is more probable the tribes in general regarded the erection of a fortress above the passes as a menace, or as a preliminary to a further hostile advance, then we should not be justified for so small an object in risking the rupture of our friendly intercourse.”

This is a very significant admission in respect to one of Lord Lytton's measures on the part of a strong advocate of the forward policy. All Statesmen, from the time of Mountstuart Elphinstone, have been of opinion that we should go to Afghanistan as defenders, and not as invaders. The Afghans would receive aid against invaders with gratitude, and if they needed aid they would be quick enough in asking for it; for, as Sir Harry Lumsden writes, “modesty has never been an Afghan weakness;” but whatever Power invaded their country they would be glad to seek the alliance of any other Power to drive them out.

Sir Bartle Frere's views may be gathered from his elaborate letter to Sir John Kaye, of June 12th, 1874, and from an important memorandum, dated 10th November of the same year. In opposition to Sir Henry Rawlinson, he deprecates the idea of making the advance of the Russians to Merv a *casus belli*:—“The place is nothing to us except as a necessary step towards Herát and Cabul, and it is not a necessary step to either.” He emphatically condemns our “negative policy,” but he admits that “a defensive policy is not necessarily inactive, nor merely stationary, still less is it necessarily weak.” This is the very point for which those who stand on the ancient ways contend. The active measures which seem to him to be essential are—1st, the placing of an advanced post at Quettah; 2ndly, well-selected English agents should be stationed at Herát,

Cabul, and Candahar, thus establishing a perfect intelligence department of European officers in Afghanistan. He would not attempt the subjugation of the country nor its military occupation, nor would he hold Herát by a force of our own troops; at least, not until we had tried the effect of such measures as Todd, and Pottinger, and Rawlinson proved could be so effectual in like cases." These instances, adduced by Sir Bartle Frere in support of his argument, appear to be singularly unfortunate. The political assistant to Sir Henry Pottinger, stationed at Shikarpore, in Sind, in 1838—1840, had access to all the correspondence, official and non-official, connected with the period Todd and Pottinger were at Herát. Pottinger's heroic conduct in saving that city from the Persians ought to have ensured him the eternal gratitude of the Herát Chief and his people. But not two months after the siege Pottinger was subjected to the grossest treatment, insulted in the presence of the King, and ordered to leave the Herát territory. He was then asked to remain, but was again insulted, his house attacked, and one of his servants seized and publicly mutilated.

The amount of Todd's expenditure at Herát used to startle the officers of the Sind Residency, for they had the means of knowing what was going on from the Shikarpore merchants, through whom many of the bills were cashed. Sir John Login, who was attached to Todd's mission as surgeon, states that the advances amounted to £190,000 in a short period. They have been estimated at upwards of £300,000. Yar Mahomed Khan received £2,500 a month, and during all this time he was carrying on a treacherous correspondence with the Persian Governor of Mushed, having for its object the expulsion of the infidel English from Afghanistan. Just as Sultan Mahomed Khan, the brother of Dost Mahomed, whom we loaded with benefits, requited us by betraying to the Sikhs our officers who had taken refuge with him after the outbreak at Peshawur. Finally, Major Todd, unable to submit any longer to the humiliating insults of an ungrateful miscreant (to use the words of Sir John Login), withdrew the mission to Candahar.

Under these circumstances, what Sir Bartle Frere can mean, by affirming that the measures adopted by Todd and Pottinger proved effectual, it is difficult to understand. Sir Henry Rawlinson was shut up in Candahar with Sir Wm. Nott's division of the Cabul army. There is no analogy between his position under the wing of a large military force and that of officers stationed in isolated situations, like Herát and Balkh, dependent upon their individual influence, and the prestige of distant British power.

This question of stationing British officers in Afghanistan may not seem of great moment to those unacquainted with the Afghan character. The English mind can scarcely understand the repugnance exhibited by Dost Mahomed and Sher Ali. Lord Salisbury, having no knowledge on the subject, dismissed it in the House of Lords with the remark, "If an ally could on such a ground exhibit any soreness of feeling, I cannot think he can be an ally about whose temper we need trouble ourselves much." Syed Noor Mahomed, Prime Minister of Cabul, who was more immediately concerned, says:—"Grey Sahib wrote me a letter recently, referring to my acquiescence, when at Simlah, to the coming of British officers to Cabul. It was as much as an order for my death."* The atmosphere of Cabul in such matters is very different to that of the House of Lords, as Lord Salisbury would perceive if he were suddenly transported to the Capital of Afghanistan.

Lord Lytton also, looking at the question from a purely English point of view, considers that "the presence and every-day acts in their midst of earnest, upright English gentlemen" was the one thing required to civilize the Afghans. To those who know the Afghans from the habit of daily intercourse with them, these words of the Viceroy denote an ingenuous simplicity, and tend to provoke an involuntary smile. "Earnest, upright English gentlemen" would have little chance of influencing Chiefs like Yar Mahomed Khan, unless endowed with other and rarer qualities; and their "every-day acts" would be as distasteful to fanatical Moollahs, Mouluvees, and Mohammedans, as the every-day acts of Afghan Chiefs and people would be distasteful to

* "Afghanistan Correspondence," p. 195.

English minds. Sir Bartle Frere says:—"Train up men like Malcolm, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe;" but such men are not as plentiful as blackberries, even in services of which Mr. Canning long ago said "that no monarchy in Europe had produced within a given time so many men of the first talents in civil and military life within the same period."

Dost Mahomed may be supposed to have known the temper of his countrymen better than Lord Lytton, and with all his desire to cement a friendly union with the English, the one thing he shrank from was a British officer, as dry-nurse, at his Capital. Gholam Houssein Khan, whose fidelity to British interests has never been doubted, and whose opportunities for forming a judgment must be allowed to have been exceptional, gave the same advice. Sir Harry Lumsden also writes:—"Unless under the most pressing danger to Afghanistan, and at the spontaneous and urgent demand of that Government itself, no proposition involving the deputing British officers into the country should, for a moment, be entertained." It has been the fixed and settled opinion of the various eminent men who have ruled India before Lord Lytton, that "one of the best securities for success and harmony in our dealings with the Afghans, and for the avoidance of embarrassments, consisted in our having as few points of contact with them as possible."

We have in previous paragraphs passed rapidly in review some of the main features of the recommendations and suggestions advanced by the most eminent advocates of "the forward policy." Following in the train of these greater luminaries are numerous satellites of inferior brilliancy, whose schemes for the preservation of our Indian Empire from Russian aggression take a wider range, and embrace measures which would seem to require a fathomless exchequer and a perennial supply of soldiers, which our Crimean experiences would scarcely give us warrant to believe that the British Islands could furnish. Many of these writers are not satisfied with rectifying our frontier in India by obtaining a footing in Afghanistan, and by garrisoning Herát,

Candahar, Balkh, and Cabul, but they would push our outposts to the Oxus, and some even contemplate with complacency hostile expeditions to the deserts of Central Asia. As a specimen of the Imperial scope of such projects, it will be sufficient to quote from a recent letter, published in the *Scotsman*, and transferred to the *Morning Post*, of the 11th October, 1878. After alluding to the possibility of a Russian advance "by Persia and the valley of the Attreck to Herát," the writer goes on :—

"In the meantime, what should England be doing? Carrying out heartily the Anglo-Turkish Convention; constructing a railway from the Bosphorus to Bagdad, another from the Mediterranean to join it, and another branch to Erzeroum; making roads in all directions, both for commercial and strategical purposes; encouraging, and creating if necessary, a large steam flotilla on the Tigris; possessing ourselves, by purchase or otherwise, of the Island of Karrack. With all this, preparing by every means a strong military position near Erzeroum."

It is worthy of remark, and of serious consideration, that the Prime Minister endorses this proposition in his speech at the Mansion House, in which he stated that "the city of Erzeroum will in all probability be the scene of the strongest fortifications in Asia Minor." But to return to the work that the writer of the letter in the *Morning Post* cuts out for English brains and English money :—

"Surveying all the passes leading from Asia Minor into Persia, aiding in every way in the regeneration of the Turkish army by lending British officers, &c."

Again :—

"If we make proper use of the time we shall have at our disposal, we ought to be able to collect in that country (Asia Minor) at short notice (shorter than Russia could collect 100,000 men at Herát) 500,000 men—British, Turks, and Indians. With such a force at our disposal, we ought to be able to hold in check the Russian army of the Caucasus, and in addition to form columns which could enter Persia in different directions through the Western frontier, and attack the rear as well as the communications of any Russian army in its advance on India." (This is Sir Henry Rawlinson's idea, commented on by Lord Sandhurst.) "Further, another force, dispatched from India to the Persian Gulf, could operate from the South, while from Beloochistan a force could act from the East—in fact, holding Asia Minor, we could absolutely paralyze Persia from the West and from the East and from the South."

A little further on, in the same letter, we find :—

“ In spite of every opposition on the part of many eminent men, the Indian Government has been induced to occupy Quettah, in Beloochistan, which position is being turned into a powerful ‘*place d’armes*,’ in which a British army could assemble with all the resources of England and India at its back, and meet the advance of a Russian one.”

Again :—

“ I have now tried to point out that if we carry out the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and have as a condition, absolutely essential, the alliance of Turkey, we have nothing to fear from Russia. But Russia knows as well as we do the necessity of a Turkish alliance to us, and every effort will be made by her to prevent its being realized. She holds in her hand a fearful weapon to use in her favour—the indemnity, and it would be worth our while to pay it ourselves sooner than lose the alliance of Turkey ! ”

This last proposition, surely, is a climax. It is piling Pelion on Ossa with a vengeance on the shoulders of British tax-payers. As we read, with bated breath, the startling list of all we ought to undertake to preserve ourselves from the machinations of Russia, the reflection could not but arise, Who is sufficient for these things? But when we are told that we are to pay the Turkish indemnity, there is a feeling of relief, because we may be certain that even the blandest and most audacious of Chancellors of the Exchequer, however imbued with Imperial doctrines, would hardly venture, especially after the experiment of the Rhodope grant, to make such a proposition to Parliament. Money, the sinews of war, is the great want of Russia, and we ourselves are to supply this want, and for what purpose? to secure the alliance of Turkey. It does not seem at all incredible to those who have studied the cavernous workings of the Asiatic mind, that before any great length of time we may be brought to loggerheads with our friends the Turks. Mountstuart Elphinstone, no mean observer of the teachings of history, wrote long ago :—“ I never knew a close alliance between a civilized and an uncivilized State that did not end in mutual hatred in three years. Our payment of the Turkish indemnity would be worse than our pouring thousands into the lap of Yar Mahomed Khan of Herát, all the time that the wily Afghan Chief was chuckling in his sleeve, and telling the King of Persia, the Asylum of Islam, that “ he merely

tolerated the presence of the English Envoy from expediency, as he (the Envoy) was by no means niggardly in the expenditure, jewels," &c. If this sort of language is used to the Turks, they must indeed believe that we are in great straits for their alliance, and that no demands which they could make would be too onerous for us to grant. "Capital fellows these Feringhees" (the Belooches used to say on the occasion of our first advance to Afghanistan.) "We sell them our camels one day, steal them the next, and sell them again to them on the third day." All these suggestions must appear, one would imagine, to soberminded practical Englishmen as dreams, vague unsubstantial dreams, like those put forward in former years, that England should go to war with France to prevent the annexation of Savoy and Nice, or step in with armed interference to forbid her acquisition of the left bank of the Rhine; or, at a still later date, that Germany should be coerced into the relinquishment of any claim she might make to the possession of French territory. But these are not the suggestions of "anonymous paragraph writers," nor "the harebrained chatter of irresponsible frivolity;" they are the deliberate and matured recommendations of General Sir Henry Green, a distinguished military and political officer, who has done excellent service on the Sind frontier, and has always been one of the busiest and most persistent advocates "of the forward policy." His letter was published in the *Scotsman*, as was said, at the request of the Duke of Sutherland, who endorsed its sentiments as emanating from an Officer who had spent his life in India, chiefly in Afghanistan and Beloochistan, and who was well able to judge of the effect of European politics on the minds of the natives of India.

Moreover, these views are to a certain extent recognized and sanctioned by the Prime Minister himself, as we can gather from his speech at the Mansion House, and from other utterances. They are built up on the same foundation as the secret Anglo-Turkish Convention, which gave us "peace with honour;" they are conceived in the same spirit which would fain make us believe that Cyprus was an outlying bulwark of the British Empire, and

a defensive post for our Indian territories. The Prime Minister tells us that "if Asia Minor and the valley of the Euphrates were in the possession of a very weak, or a very powerful State, it would be by no means impossible for an adequate army to march through the passes of Asia Minor, and through Persia, and absolutely threaten the dominions of the Queen." Here we have the germs of the suggestions of Sir Henry Green, of the new Imperial policy, which Lord Lytton was sent out to India to inaugurate, and which no doubt found a responsive echo in his ardent and poetical imagination. The same master mind which has linked free and enlightened England, teeming with life and progress, to an effete and decaying Sovereignty, approaching the last stage of decomposition, which has pledged British resources to fight the battle of the Turks, and meet a formidable adversary on her own ground in Asia Minor, no doubt contemplated with satisfaction the rectification of our Indian frontier, and the location of British troops in the midst of a hostile population, on the confines of the Hindoo Koosh mountains, or on the edge of the Turkuman deserts. In this lies the grand distinction between the old policy of Lord Canning, Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo, and Lord Northbrook, and of the successive Ministries under whom they served, and the new Imperial policy of Lord Lytton, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Beaconsfield. The marvel is that, with this broad distinction existing, which must be patent to all men now that it is revealed, Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote should have both stated, so late as June 1877, "that there was no change in the policy of the Government."

The first result of the new policy is an unnecessary, impolitic, and unjust war; but before we proceed to substantiate this charge, and to show that the measures adopted by Lord Lytton have been the main cause of this great calamity, it will be necessary to explain the state of affairs on the North-Western frontier at the period of Lord Lytton's arrival in India. One of the first questions Lord Lytton had to decide was connected with the Khan of Khelat, and the tribes which owe him more or less real allegiance. This question had been constantly before Lord

Northbrook's Government throughout his administration, and had given rise to voluminous correspondence. At length matters had reached such a state that the Commissioner in Sind, Sir William Merewether, had recommended armed intervention. To this Lord Northbrook would not consent, but at the same time he determined that a complete change of policy must take place. We had hitherto endeavoured to deal with the frontier tribes entirely through the Khan, giving them to understand that they were regarded solely as his subjects. This policy, after long and patient trial, had failed. It was now decided to make our own arrangements direct with the frontier tribes, or rather to mediate between the Khan and the Chiefs of the tribes, thus treating the Khan more as *primus inter pares* than the absolute Ruler of the country. Before the measures requisite to inaugurate this new policy were completed, Lord Northbrook quitted India, and Lord Lytton succeeded him, and proceeded to carry out the details in a different spirit, and with a different object. In order to bring out the striking contrast between the measures of Lord Northbrook and Lord Lytton, a reference may be made to one of Lord Lytton's speeches (commenting on Sir John Strachey's financial statement of March 1877), in which he uses the strongest condemnatory language in regard to the policy of his predecessors in the Viceroyalty. He says:—

"Those neighbouring regions, after twenty-five years of the closest geographical contact between us and them, remained almost the only ones in the whole world which are forbidden ground to British footsteps, except on some mission of vengeance, and for the purpose of burning the homes and destroying the property of our neighbours, in retaliation for outrages committed by them upon our own territory. Surely this is not a state of things which any Englishman can contemplate with unmitigated satisfaction, or which any English Statesman would wish to perpetuate. . . . I do not think that, consistently with its high duties to God and man, as the greatest civilizing Power, this Government can watch, coldly and immoveably, its closest neighbours floundering in anarchy and bloodshed without extending to them, in their hour of need, a kindly and a helpful hand, if they seek its assistance and invoke its guidance. Such a policy would be, in my opinion, an atheistic and inhuman one."

What the exact meaning the Viceroy intended to convey by

the use of the word "atheistic" it is difficult to determine, but the word "inhuman" is easily understood. Lord Lytton had only been a few months in India; his previous training and experience had given him no acquaintance with Indian affairs, or qualified him in any way to pronounce an authoritative judgment on a difficult administrative problem, to the solution of which the best intellects and the largest practical experience of officers of the Indian civil and military services had been devoted since the time when the Punjab came under British rule. Lord Lytton had evidently not read carefully the despatches of the Home Authorities, nor the reports of the officers employed on the frontier, but formed a hasty opinion from imperfect information, and clothed it in strong expressions. Had he studied the question he would have found that the orders sent out by the various Secretaries of State, and acted upon by the Lieutenant-Governors, and the able officers employed under them, inculcated anything but "an atheistic and inhuman" policy. The following paragraphs from a despatch by Lord Halifax, dated 16th January, 1864, after the Umbeyla campaign, gives in detail his views of the policy to be pursued towards the tribes on the North-West frontier :—

"Our true course ought to be not to interfere with their internal concerns, but to cultivate friendly relations with them, and to endeavour to convince them, by our forbearance and kindly conduct, that their wisest plan is to be on good terms with us, in order that they may derive those advantages from intercourse with us which are sure to follow the interchange of commodities and mutual benefits." Again :— " Advantage should be taken of every opportunity to conciliate the Chiefs of these tribes, and to create and improve a friendly feeling in the minds of these hereditary leaders, whether religious or otherwise, who in semi-barbarous communities usually exercise so great an influence over the minds of their followers, and whose own conduct, when not influenced by caprice, is generally determined by self-interest." Again :—"It is of paramount importance that these Chiefs should be made to understand that our policy is peace, and, while resolute to repel and chastise any aggression upon our own territories, we do not seek to extend our frontier, nor do we desire to interfere with our neighbours."

These we believe to have been the principles which animated and directed our officers from the earliest period after the annexation of the Punjab.

Can any exception be taken to this policy of conciliation mingled with firmness—the determination to uphold British supremacy, in order to afford protection to British subjects living in the vicinity of the frontier, and yet at the same time to use every effort to cultivate friendly relations with the wild and independent tribes inhabiting the mountain ranges? Is it just to brand such a policy with the epithets of atheistic and inhuman? If rumour is to be credited, Lord Lytton soars above details, and he has probably, therefore, never turned his attention to the deeply interesting and instructive reports of the Punjab administration, nor even to the published statements of the moral and material progress of India, presented annually to Parliament. These statements are not exhaustive of the numerous subjects of which they treat, and they are very unequal, depending on the industry and ability of the officer selected to prepare them; but they are founded on authentic documents at the India Office, and are generally compiled with care and judgment. An attentive perusal of them shows a gradual improvement in our relations with the frontier tribes, that the border has of late years become decidedly more peaceable, and that there are causes at work, certain, if not interfered with, to produce, in course of time, most important results. The establishment of hospitals and dispensaries, the offer of waste lands on liberal terms, the interchange of friendly visits, and, above all, the admittance into the ranks of our army, police, and civil establishments, of large and increasing numbers of these border tribes, are measures tending gradually to create respect for our power, and confidence in our good feeling and justice. The philanthropic efforts of British officers employed on the frontier are beyond all praise; they are known to few, but they reflect the highest credit on the officers and on their country. Many of them, no doubt, read with pain Lord Lytton's hasty and unjust remarks, betraying such a want of knowledge of the subject, and such an absence of due appreciation of their persevering and self-denying labours. The same precipitation and inexperience in Asiatic modes of thought, usages, and prejudices characterize Lord Lytton's conduct in reference to the

affairs of Afghanistan, and have mainly contributed to the present rupture with the Amír of Cabul.

All the proceedings, however, of Lord Lytton have met with the entire approval of Her Majesty's Government, and both Houses of Parliament have ratified that approval, after a very brief time afforded them for studying the correspondence connected with this important question. It remains to be seen whether the people of England when they have had the opportunity of examining the whole case will confirm the verdict. Those who believe that the new policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government, and carried out in such a hasty and inconsiderate manner by Lord Lytton, has plunged the country into an impolitic and unjust war are bound to use their best endeavours to place the facts of the case before their countrymen. In furtherance of the instructions conveyed to him by Lord Salisbury in his Despatch of the 28th February, 1876, the first step taken by Lord Lytton on his arrival in India was to send his Native Aide-de-Camp Resaldar Major Khanan Khan, with a letter to the Amír dated 5th May, 1876, barely twenty-five days after his assumption of the Viceroyalty, announcing a proposed British Mission to Cabul. Sher Ali declined to receive this Mission; and we learn from Lord Lytton's Despatch of 10th May, 1877, that his grounds were "that he desired no change in his relations with the British Government, which appeared to have been defined by that Government to its own satisfaction at the Simla Conference. If the British Government had now anything new to say about them, he would prefer to send his own Agent to the Viceroy, in order that the subjects of discussion weighed by a minute and exact investigation, might be committed to writing." Sir William Muir has recorded his opinion that Sher Ali's refusal was couched "in as courteous terms as the case admitted." But Lord Lytton took offence immediately, as if he desired to seize the first opportunity and pretext for pushing matters to extremities. It must be borne in mind that Sher Ali firmly believed, that under the solemn promise of Lord Mayo, he might consider himself safe from having British Officers forced upon him against his will, and against the wishes of his Chiefs and people.

Lord Northbrook distinctly states, when Syed Noor Mahomed objected to the step on similar grounds, that "he felt he had no right under the assurance that had been given by Lord Mayo, that British Officers should not be sent against the opinion of the Amír, to consider that any offence had been committed against the British Government." Lord Lytton was of a different opinion, and but for the interposition of the more experienced members of his Council, he would have written to the Amír in such menacing terms that a favourable answer could hardly have been expected, and the British Government would then have been placed at the very outset in the embarrassing position either of sitting down quietly under an open affront, or of being compelled to have recourse to measures of coercion. Eventually a modified letter was addressed to Sher Ali, dated the 8th July, 1876, closing with the intimation amounting to a threat, that if he hastily rejected the hand of friendship, the Viceroy would be obliged "to regard Afghanistan as a State which has voluntarily isolated itself from the alliance and support of the British Government." Lord Lytton writes at this time:—"We authorized Dr. Bellew and others to address the Amír and his Ministers letters, unofficially explaining our sentiments, and the importance of the opportunity then offered to the Afghan Government for materially strengthening its position at home and abroad." This appears to have been a very unusual and illadvised step, as it would only tend to confuse and perplex the Amír, and to make him suspicious of his Ministers. The thought would occur to him that underneath all this pressure there was some deep-laid scheme, which threatened his own interests, and boded ill for Afghan independence. Asiatics are naturally suspicious, especially the Afghans, and to negotiate successfully with them it is important to pursue a simple straightforward course, and to deal with the Chief, and not with his subordinates. Finally, the Amír sends an answer submitting two alternative propositions. Lord Lytton accepts the second, that the British Vakeel at Cabul should proceed to Simla, charged with a confidential explanation "of the personal views and sentiments of the Amír on the subject of his relations with the British Government."

The British Agent, Nawab Atta Mahomed Khan, reached Simla on the 6th of October, 1876, and on the next day Sir Lewis Pelly, Lieut.-Colonel O. T. Burne, and Captain Grey had an interview with him. A summary of the conversation that took place is given in the Afghanistan Papers (p. 180). Atta Mahomed assigns eight reasons for the estrangement of the Amír.

1. The decision on the Seistan boundary.
2. Our recent proceedings in Khelat territories.
3. Our remonstrances, in 1874, on behalf of Yakoob Khan.
4. The transmission of presents to Wakhan.
5. The results of the mission of Syed Noor Mahomed in 1873.
6. Matter contained in a recent letter from the Commissioner of Peshawur to the British Agent at Cabul.
7. The Amír's impression that our policy is one of self-interest, irrespective of the interests of Afghanistan.
8. Our refusal to sign a definite treaty of alliance in 1873.

Lord Lytton, in his letter to Lord Salisbury, of 10th May, 1877, alludes to only four of these grievances—the first, third, fourth, and eighth,—all of which occurred before his accession to the Viceroyalty. It is not necessary to dwell on each of these four grievances, but it may be observed that not one of them afforded any just ground of complaint against the British Government. Much of the ill feeling, therefore, manifested by Sher Ali must be attributed to his own morbid temperament. Sir Harry Lumsden described him, twenty years ago, “as a man of violent temper and cruel disposition,” but “possessed of intelligence and aptitude for business.” He is prone to fits of depression, causing, at times, the belief in his insanity. His conduct, on the death of his favourite son, Mahommed Ali, at the battle of Kujbaz, gave countenance to this belief. In dealing with a man of this disposition, a Viceroy, desirous of promoting peace, would have been slow to take offence, and would have exercised more than usual forbearance. The decision with regard to the Seistan boundary in 1872, no doubt excited a deep feeling of resentment in the mind of Sher Ali. The objects of the British Government

were wholly disinterested. They desired to remove a cause of quarrel between Persia and Afghanistan, and to avert, if possible, the chance of collision and bloodshed. No officer better fitted to carry out their wishes could have been selected as Commissioner than Sir Frederick Goldsmid, but he was thwarted throughout by Mirza Maasim Khan, the Persian Commissioner, whose conduct afforded sufficient ground for breaking up the Commission, and leaving the question for settlement at Tehrân. This would have been the wisest plan, as, although the decision of the British Commissioner was perfectly equitable, it gave offence both to Persia and to Sher Ali. The less we interfere with the internal affairs and disputes of Asiatic Rulers the better.

Lord Lytton makes no mention of the second alleged grievance—"the recent proceedings in the Khelat territories." These included the occupation of Quettah, which the Amîr described to the Turkish Envoy as "placing an armed man at the back door of his house," adding, "what can be his motive, except he wants to find his way in when you are asleep?"* Under an article in our treaty with the Khan of Khelat, we had a perfect right to occupy Quettah, as it is situated in Khelat territory. But Lord Northbrook has stated that its occupation did not form part of his contemplated arrangements for the settlement of Khelat affairs. As a significant step in the direction of Lord Lytton's rumoured policy, combined with the threatened advance of Kashmir troops towards Chitral, at our instigation, and the opening of new relations with the Chiefs to the north of the Cabul river, it naturally alarmed the Amîr. At this period, also, preparations were being made on the banks of the Indus in the collection of supplies and means of transport; a bridge of boats was thrown across the river at Kooshalgur, and the air was full of warlike rumours. No wonder the Amîr became anxious and distrustful. Sir Henry Rawlinson suggests that "it was the Amîr's consciousness of his

* This forcible expression of the Amîr, uttered to the Turkish Envoy in the confidence of private intercourse with a co-religionist, is strong evidence of his feelings on the subject of the occupation of Quettah. It is related in Mr. Grattan Geary's Work, "Through Asiatic Turkey," Vol. II., page 323, as communicated to him by a Turkish politician at Constantinople.

own disloyalty which made him regard the movement on Quettah as a menace." But up to the time of Lord Lytton's aggressive measures, Sher Ali had shown no symptom of disloyalty to us. As a weak State between two mighty Powers, he naturally felt suspicious both of England and of Russia. Sir William Muir, when endeavouring to prevent the Viceroy from sending his menacing letter, writes:—"Hitherto his whole line of conduct has exhibited an alarm and distrust of Russia, which has, up to the present time, made him entirely dependent upon us. What the effect of the present menacing letter may be it is impossible to foretell." Lord Northbrook and Sir Henry Norman both support this statement.

Had we adhered to the wise policy of keeping within the boundary line which had marked the limits of our Indian territories for so many years, no cause of distrust could have arisen; and, on the first serious difficulty with Russia, Sher Ali would most probably have sought the protection of the British Government. It would seem evident to all unprejudiced minds that, under the old aspect of affairs, Sher Ali and the Afghans would naturally cling to England rather than to Russia. Since the withdrawal of our armies from Cabul, the British Government has conferred nothing but benefits upon the Chiefs and people of Afghanistan. Constant intercourse must have made known generally the advantages of a British alliance, while the contrast between an aggressive and a non-aggressive Power must have tended to inspire confidence in us, and increasing distrust of Russia. The Afghans are a manly race, and admire manliness in others. The attachment shown by many of them who have enlisted in our ranks to their officers is remarkable. Personal friendships have also existed between British Officers and Afghan Chiefs. All these elements of goodwill are in our favour in comparison with Russia. One deeprooted feeling, however, separates alike the Englishman and the Russian from these Mohammedan nations—religious fanaticism, "the springs of which are as obscure as the effects are tremendous." Baron Jomini, in arguing that he saw no reason for "mutual jealousy" between

England and Russia, remarked "that, should the two Governments act more together, in the interests of general progress and civilization, it might be the means of strengthening both in their respective Eastern dominions, where a powerful antagonistic element existed in the Mussulman population, a menace to both Governments, and should at any time a leader of daring character arise, much was to be feared by such an event."* There is great truth in this observation, and Lord Lytton would do well to bear it in mind in his dealings with the contingents of Native Princes to further schemes of territorial aggrandizement. We are a handful of foreigners ruling over conquered millions, and it would be a fatal error to fritter away our military strength and resources, more especially our European troops, in the distant regions of Afghanistan. We can never trust to India as a secure base of operations as we would trust to England in the event of an European emergency. In any struggle with an European Power our military strength in India must be increased rather than diminished. It was a vain flourish of trumpets, which deceived no one acquainted with the true state of affairs in India, to bring native troops at a vast expense to Europe with the view of intimidating Russia.

On the 10th of October another meeting was held with Atta Mahomed Khan, at which the Viceroy was present. Sir Lewis Pelly, Colonel Burne, and Captain Grey also attended. It will be observed that the Foreign Secretary of the Government was absent from both of these important meetings, that is to say, the responsible head of the office through which the Viceroy's communications with all Chiefs and Princes are invariably conducted, was not present at discussions which had an important bearing on orders that he would eventually have to carry out. If the Foreign Secretary was unable to attend through illness, or any other cause, the Under-Secretary in the Foreign Department could have attended. This was done in Lord Dalhousie's time in a similar contingency. Thus, also in regard to the affairs of Khelat, it will be remembered that the Viceroy deputed his own Military Secretary to be the bearer of confidential communications

* "Central Asia Papers," p. 46.

to the Khan, and to the British political Officer at that Court. In the despatch of the 23rd of March, 1877, in vol. 2 "Beloochistan Papers," paragraph 27, it is stated that "Colonel Colley carried out his mission with care and judgment." Admitting fully the qualifications of Colonel Colley, it is clear that he was only one of the officers of the Viceroy's own staff, and had no official or responsible position connected with the Government of India, neither had Colonel Burne as Private Secretary. The advice and assistance of these officers in their proper sphere are calculated to be of great value to the Viceroy, but that is not a solid ground for allowing them to supersede the regularly-appointed officers of the Government of India, who are the responsible advisers of the Government, and who possess, what officers on the personal staff of the Viceroy generally do not, trained experience in the working of our Indian Administration, and are therefore better fitted to carry out the decisions of the Government. One of the disadvantages of this irregular proceeding was, as will be remarked in this case, that there is no official record of instructions to Colonel Colley, nor any formal report from him. Under the old system of government, these irregularities would have been animadverted upon by the Home Authorities. In connection with this new mode of transacting business we have, in the published "Afghanistan Correspondence," extracts from private notes and memoranda put forward to establish certain important points (the details, for instance, of what passed at the Umballa Conference) which have been shown to have been positively incorrect. In fact, in one instance, a gentleman not present at an interview is allowed, years afterwards, to put his own interpretation on what passed at the time, and what was really recorded then and there by the Under-Secretary in the Foreign Department.

At the second meeting with Atta Mahomed, Lord Lytton took occasion to explain to him, as he said subsequently, "without reserve all that he had in his mind; he had no doubt that the British Agent would convey this faithfully to the Amír." How Lord Lytton, holding as he did in his hand the momentous issues of peace and war, could conceive that the use of language,

so calculated to provoke the bitterest feelings of hatred and indignation in the breast of the Amír, was becoming the dignity of his high office, it is difficult to understand. Let us select a few of the choice expressions of this conciliatory message to Sher Ali:—"Our only interest in maintaining the independence of Afghanistan is to provide for the security of our own frontier. But the moment we cease to regard Afghanistan as a friendly and firmly-allied State, what is there to prevent us from providing for the security of our frontier by an understanding with Russia, which might have the effect of wiping Afghanistan out of the map altogether? If the Amír does not desire to come to a speedy understanding with us, Russia does, and she desires it, at his expense." "If the Amír remained our friend, this military power (the British) could be spread round him as a ring of iron, and if he became our enemy, it could break him as a reed." "His own son is his opponent, conspiracies are rife in favour of his son, the people are discontented, the treasury is empty. The Amir's position is surrounded with difficulties. This is the man who pretends to hold the balance between England and Russia, independent of either. His position is rather that of an earthen pipkin between two iron pots." This latter homely illustration, although, perhaps, Lord Lytton is not aware of it, is a term of low abuse amongst Orientals, and conveys a gross insult. Imagine Atta Mahomed's astonishment at such language in the mouth of the Viceroy. A chord of sympathy pervades the hearts of all Mohammedans. With many high qualities, and capacities for rule, they are a haughty, unforgiving, fanatical race; they cherish the memories of their glorious Past; and, doubtless, in his inner mind, Atta Mahomed felt the insult offered to the Amír, and commented upon it, in no friendly spirit to the British nation, when closeted with his co-religionists.

"Is He the Angel Gabriel come down from heaven that he should talk to me in this manner?" said an old Mohammedan Chief on the banks of the Indus forty years ago, when addressed in somewhat similar language by a young political Agent, whose careless words bore bitter fruit in after times of trouble. Mr. E. Schuyler tells us "that the Russians personally have not so much

of that contemptuous feeling which is so marked in the dealings of the Anglo-Saxon race with people of lower culture and civilization." The evil effects of such a pernicious example on the part of a Viceroy are incalculable. We read in Gibbon of the haughty message of the Mohammedan Caliph to the Roman Emperor in the VIIIth century, and its barbaric grandeur strikes the imagination. "In the name of the most merciful God, Hárún Al Rashed, Commander of the Faithful, to Nicephorus the Roman dog. I have read thy letter, O thou Son of an unbelieving mother. Thou shalt not hear, thou shalt behold my reply." "It was written in characters of blood and fire on the plains of Phrygia." In the XIXth century we look for more measured language and Christian humility from a Viceroy, who, Lord Salisbury has the hardihood to tell the House of Lords, "in caution and sound hard discretion has never been exceeded by any Viceroy." The same Minister, when pressed home to explain his misleading and unsatisfactory replies, says boldly, with true Strafford ring, "In the future no answer at all shall be given to questions of that kind." Let Englishmen who love the liberties of their country beware of such "Grand Viziers of government by prerogative." On the 11th of October Lord Lytton addressed a letter to Sher Ali, and intrusted it to Atta Mahomed Khan, who returned to Cabul at the end of that month. In this letter Lord Lytton sent an invitation to the Amír to attend the assemblage at Delhi on the 1st of January, 1877, for the proclamation of Her Majesty's Imperial title. This was a mistake. It was not likely that the Amír, as an independent Sovereign, would be flattered by the invitation, or would accept it, as it would place him on a level with the feudatory Princes of India. He returned no answer. Lord Lytton also intimated that Sir Lewis Pelly would meet Sher Ali's Prime Minister at Peshawur, if the Amír still desired to enter into a treaty engagement.

Various letters from Atta Mahomed, after his arrival at Cabul, state the result of discussions by Sher Ali's Ministers on the question of receiving British officers. "Such an arrangement filled them with apprehension." "Their opinion was that this

request of the British Government should be declined." In the end, however, "owing to helplessness," "though considering that the residence of British officers would not at all be advantageous to the two Governments," the Amír consented, and his Prime Minister, Syed Noor Mahomed Shah, was despatched to Peshawur, where he arrived on the 27th January, 1877, in very ill health. Sir Lewis Pelly met him, and it may be remarked, without any imputation upon that officer, who has filled many responsible situations with credit, that his selection for this duty seems to have been unfortunate. His *Sinde* antecedents were not likely to prepossess the Afghans in his favour, nor his previous connection with the Persian Mission at Tehrán. He was a well-known supporter of the aggressive policy of General Jacob and Sir Henry Rawlinson. His name, too, had been prominently associated with the deposition of the Guikwar. He was a new man on the Punjab frontier, having had no dealings with the Afghans, nor they with him. The Amír had been informed that he was the Special Envoy whom Lord Lytton had brought out with him from England, and intended to send to Cabul, and whose mission the Amír had declined to receive.

The previous measures of the Viceroy were calculated to alarm Sher Ali, and it was very probable that he would connect Sir Lewis Pelly in some way with these measures. Syed Noor Mahomed Shah had suggested the name of Colonel Pollock as Commissioner to meet him :—"On account of our former intimacy they would be able, when they met, to talk over all matters frankly and fully together." Sir Henry Rawlinson calls Syed Noor Mahomed "the Amír's evil genius," and says, "he was bitterly opposed to us." But this desire to meet an old friend is rather proof to the contrary. The conditions sought to be imposed upon the Amír by Lord Lytton were, many of them, entirely inconsistent with Sher Ali's independence. The Viceroy certainly offered to become the jailer of Yakoob Khan, a concession, one would imagine, scarcely in accordance with the dignity of Her Majesty's Representative. Even such a concession was not likely to reconcile the Amír to proposals for the establishment of

telegraphic communication through his dominions, to the indiscriminate admission of Englishmen, official and non-official, into Afghanistan, and to the location of British Agents in Herát, Balkh, and other Afghan cities.

There were other solid advantages no doubt, if only Sher Ali could be brought to appreciate them, and that he would do so in the end Lord Lytton, looking at the matter from a purely English point of view, apparently believed, as he states in his telegram of the 2nd August, 1878:—"We believe we could correct situation, if allowed to treat as a question between us and the Amír, and probably could do so without recourse to force." No opportunity, however, occurred of ascertaining whether the Amír would accept the conditions proposed by Lord Lytton, as the preliminary condition on which Sir Lewis Pelly was directed to insist as a *sine quâ non* (viz., that of stationing British officers in Afghanistan) occupied the whole time of the Conference, until the death of Noor Mahomed Shah, which took place on the 26th March, 1877.

It is impossible to read the proceedings of the Conference, without perceiving that one single question was uppermost in the mind of the dying Envoy, charged as he was to convey the sentiments of the Amír, and of the Afghan Chiefs and people. "Why all this pressing," he says, "to send British officers to Afghanistan, when you declare that you have no wish to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan? It has roused the suspicion of the Amír, and his suspicion is confirmed by the arbitrary acts of your Government, and he is now convinced that to allow British officers to reside in his country will be to relinquish his own authority, and the lasting disgrace thus brought on the Afghan people will be attached to his name, and he will sooner perish than submit to this. The British nation is great and powerful, and the Afghan people cannot resist its power, but the people are self-willed and independent, and prize their honour above life."* What are Afghan honour and Afghan independence to Lord Lytton? The distant and unreal danger of a Russian advance on India overleaps such minor considerations. What are villages burned, and homes destroyed, and women and children

starved, and misery and hatred and despair sown broadcast throughout the land, in comparison with ideal British interests and the scientific rectification of a frontier? Yes, the British nation is great and powerful, as the dying Envoy said, with marked earnestness and gravity, and the Afghan people are weak, and Lord Lytton can break them as a reed, and trample them under foot as an earthen pipkin, if they venture to stand in the way of his Imperial policy. But God resisteth the proud; and this temper of mind, whether in individuals or in nations, makes to itself great reverses.

On the death of Syed Noor Mahomed, Lord Lytton lost no time in closing the Conference, although he was aware that a fresh Envoy was on his way from Cabul, who, it was reported, had authority to accept all the conditions of the British Government. Instead of exercising forbearance, and seizing on every opening which afforded a prospect of bringing about a peaceful settlement, Lord Lytton seems on all occasions to have taken the exactly opposite course, and to have determined to cut the Gordian knot of difficulties with the sword. At this critical juncture, when it was especially desirable that some representative of the British Government should be near Sher Ali, to take advantage of any propitious moment to soothe his angry feelings, to allay his suspicions, and to place matters in as favourable a light as possible, not only with the Amír, but with the Chiefs about his Court, Lord Lytton withdrew the British Agent from Cabul. It is difficult to imagine a more ill-advised step. If Russian intrigues were dreaded, this was to act precisely as they would wish, and to throw the game entirely into their hands. It deprived the Amír of all moral support, removed every check, and, with a Chief of his moody and sullen disposition, sharpened his sense of wrong, and gave him additional grounds for apprehension. It discouraged the well-wishers of the British Government, and left them without a rallying point to make head against the fanaticism of the anti-British party. They could not trust each other, but they could trust a British Agent of rank of their own creed, who would report favourably on their conduct,

and ensure them a reward. It was indeed a hostile measure, and calculated to provoke hostility. It had the further disadvantage of leaving the British Government in ignorance of what was going on at Cabul. Intelligence from that quarter henceforth only reached India through questionable and uncertain channels of communication.

From March 1877 until July 1878 there appears to have been no correspondence between the Viceroy and Sher Ali. Then came the news of the arrival of a Russian Mission at Cabul, "the true purpose of which," Sir Henry Rawlinson tells us, "was to confirm Sher Ali's hostility to England, and to provoke us to enter on an armed conflict with the Afghans, the benevolent aim of Russia being to lead us on to exhaust our strength in what she hoped would be an endless and profitless struggle at Cabul." This is mere conjecture; we know little or nothing of the real relations between Sher Ali and the Russian Mission, one of the mischievous consequences of the withdrawal of the British Agent at Cabul. We know that the Russian Mission was detained a month on some pretext before it was permitted to proceed through Afghan territory. The Amír declared he did not, in the first instance, invite it. Lord Northbrook says "that he tried to prevent its going;" but he gave it permission to come on when he had no alternative. Its object, he said, was only to exchange civilities. "He had no desire to give Russia a right of way through his country." It was a source, no doubt, of embarrassment to him, and led to the postponement of the British Mission, which it will be recollected he did not reject, but only postponed. If, however, it was the "benevolent aim" of Russia to involve us in war with the Afghans, she succeeded. One of Napoleon's maxims in war was "never to do what the enemy wished you to do, for this reason alone, that he desired it." Lord Lytton seems to have acted on the contrary principle. This Russian Mission of four or five Europeans, and a few Cossacks, which Lord Beaconsfield admits was quite allowable, and which was withdrawn immediately on a representation being made at St. Petersburg, fills Lord Lytton with alarm, and is the basis of

the violent policy subsequently pursued towards the Amír. He despatches an urgent telegram, dated the 2nd of August, to the Secretary of State, announcing "his intention to insist on reception of suitable British Mission at Cabul, that he did not anticipate serious resistance, that to re-establish the preponderance of British influence in Afghanistan was necessary for the safety of India," that influence apparently, in the Viceroy's opinion, being endangered by the temporary presence of a few Russian Officers at Cabul. If such were the case the safety of India must indeed rest on a very sandy foundation. Lord Metcalfe certainly did say "that we were sitting on a barrel of gunpowder in India, and never knew when it would explode;" and again, "that we should wake up some morning, and find that we had lost India." But Lord Metcalfe pointed to danger from within, and not from without. In reference to the present state of affairs, that eminent Statesman made another striking remark. "Depend upon it," he said, "the surest way to bring Russia down upon ourselves, is for us to cross the Indus, and meddle with the countries beyond it."

Lord Lytton, ignoring alike the lessons of history and of past experience, fixes his eyes on Russian machinations, and seems blind to other contingencies. It is decided by the Viceroy that Sir Neville Chamberlain shall be deputed to Cabul, as British Envoy, and Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan is directed to proceed in advance with a letter to the Amír. On the 17th of August, Abdulla Jan, the heir apparent, dies, and a delay occurs before the Mission can commence its journey. Meantime Lord Lytton telegraphs to the Commissioner of Peshawur, to inform one of the Amír's principal officers that the Mission will, in any case, leave Peshawur about the 16th of September; that a refusal of free passage and safe conduct will be considered "an act of open hostility." Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan reached Cabul on the 10th of September. He was well received on the journey, and hospitably entertained on arrival. On the 12th he had an interview with the Amír, and reported him to be very much displeased, and as saying, "It is as if they were come by force. I do not agree to the Mission coming in this manner. It is as if they wish

to disgrace me. I am a friend, as before, and entertain no ill will." If Mission advance now, "resistance anticipated." Again, "that the Amír intimated that he would send for the Mission to clear up mutual misunderstandings, provided there was no attempt to force the Mission upon him without his consent being first granted, according to usual custom, otherwise he would resist it, as coming in such a manner would be a slight to him."* In a later letter, dated Cabul, 15th September, Gholam Hussein states:—"If Mission starts on 18th, without waiting for Amír's permission, there would be no hope left for the renewal of friendship or reconciliation."† On the 19th of September, Sir Neville Chamberlain telegraphed to the Viceroy, that it was now quite evident that the Amír was determined on asserting his claims to total independence of action with regard to the Mission; but that he held out the hope that hereafter he would receive it honourably. "Unless your Lordship accepts this position, all chance of a peaceful solution seems to me gone." Under instructions from the Viceroy, the Mission moved out of Peshawur to Jumrood on the 21st of September, and Major Cavagnari was sent forward with a small escort in the direction of Ali Musjid, to demand a passage through the Khyber from the commandant of the fort, Faiz Mahomed, who declared that, without orders from the Amír, he could not allow the Mission to pass his post, but "who from first to last," Major Cavagnari writes, "behaved in a most courteous manner, and very favourably impressed both Colonel Jenkins and myself."‡

Major Cavagnari asks, "Shall I make another attempt to-morrow morning, and try to bring Faiz Mahomed to reason, or make him fire upon us?" Sir Neville Chamberlain does not wish to push matters to this extremity, and returns to Peshawur, and the Mission is dissolved. He writes in his report:—"The Mission had failed; it had been turned back at the threshold of the Amír's dominions with an affront delivered before all the world." The affront was the more pointed, as two scions of the noble families of Tonk and Jeypore accompanied the Mission. But whose conduct led up to this affront? Was it not that of Lord Lytton? He knew well beforehand that the Mission would not be allowed to

* p. 248.

† 248.

‡ p. 249.

pass without the Amír's previous consent, and he had every reason to believe, also, that if he waited a short time that consent would be obtained.

Eugene Schuyler says justly, with reference to the Khokhandians, what applies equally to the Afghans:—"Asiatics do not practise common sense, which would forbid them to begin a struggle disproportionate to their means." With the overwhelming strength of British power we could have afforded to wait. It was as certain as anything could be that by hurrying matters we should bring on a conflict, and that that conflict would entail the shedding of blood—the blood of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of innocent persons, inhabiting the hills and valleys where their forefathers had dwelt for ages in freedom, owning allegiance neither to the Amír, nor to the British Government, nor to anyone except to their own Chiefs. With our improved arms of precision, our mountain guns, and formidable field artillery, our almost unlimited resources in men and money, there was no doubt that we could coerce these wild, undisciplined mountaineers. We could carry fire and sword throughout their homes; and if we chose, we could, as some have recommended, exterminate whole tribes. But is such conduct worthy of a great Christian nation? Will it commend itself to the millions of Asiatics over whom we rule in India? Will it tend to allay the feelings of dislike and disaffection with which there is little reason to doubt, unfortunately, that the larger portion of our Mohammedan subjects regard British domination?

There is a lip service founded on fear, and there is a deeper service of the heart based on justice, which all men in all countries can reverence and appreciate. Sir Henry Rawlinson writes:—"War with the Afghans is to be deprecated beyond all other wars, because, however it may end, it will leave behind it a heavy legacy of debt, and the hatred of a people who ought to be our friends." Again:—"Our old blood feuds with the Ghilzyes and Duranis will be revived and intensified, so that it will be next to impossible to restore that mutual confidence, which could alone warrant our placing in the hands of the

Afghans the permanent defence of our extreme Northern frontier." There are not only present evils, but the seeds of future evil sown, to bring forth a plentiful harvest of trouble hereafter. All this is done, according to the Viceroy's proclamation, in order that "the British Government may find the best security for its Indian frontier in the friendship of a State whose independence it seeks to confirm." In the same strain Sir Neville Chamberlain writes:—"The object of the Mission was to promote peace, and to bring about, if it was possible, a return to friendly and close relations with the Amír."

Surely all this talk of peace and friendship is a strange perversion of language taken in connection with what was evidently to be the result of the course Lord Lytton was pursuing. But to blame Lord Lytton is not to exculpate the Amír. Everyone can see that Sher Ali behaved like a madman, and hurried on to his own destruction. An individual may behave badly when a quarrel is forced upon him, but if he is not the aggressor, allowances are made for his conduct. In Sher Ali's case, we have on the one side Christianity and a boasted higher civilization, and on the other a half-civilized Ruler and a still less civilized aggregate of ignorant and fanatical tribes, and *quasi* independent Chiefs, on whose fitful support the Amír could place but little reliance. "Had there been no Russian Mission at Cabul," Sir Henry Rawlinson writes, "no indication of a desire on the part of the Turkestan authorities to interfere in Indian politics, we might have allowed the Amír to be sulky and grumbling, and even insolent, for the term of his natural life."

Here we have stated in plain and direct terms the real grounds of our forward movement into Afghanistan. Sher Ali and the Afghan nation were powerless by themselves to cause any anxiety or alarm, unless backed by Russian troops and Russian resources.

Now it may be asked with confidence whether it was in the smallest degree probable that Russia, at the close of an exhausting war with a comparatively feeble antagonist, where her losses in men and officers had been so great, and her expenditure so heavy, would have been likely to provoke a fresh contest with one of the

most powerful nations in the world. If the Russian Mission was pregnant with disastrous consequences to India, as has been so persistently affirmed, but which remains to be proved, we had only to demand its withdrawal, and Russia would have acquiesced, as in fact she did acquiesce. We could have then dealt with Sher Ali at our leisure. Lord Lytton's course of action had no doubt complicated the question, alarmed the Amír, and thrown obstacles in the way of friendly negotiations. But with the disappearance of the Russian Mission the greatest difficulty would have been removed. Sher Ali declared that on the departure of the Russians he would receive the British Mission, and he might have been persuaded to meet the Viceroy at Peshawur, or elsewhere, where by an interchange of friendly courtesies, as at Umballa in 1869, a better state of feeling might have been brought about. But to effect this, the obnoxious condition of stationing British officers in Afghan territory must have been withdrawn. This, however, was a cardinal point in the policy of Lord Salisbury and Lord Lytton to be forced on Sher Ali at all hazards, and on the Afghan people, who were more averse to this measure than Sher Ali himself. We find, at page 367 of M. Ferrier's "Caravan Journeys," a narrative of the risk he ran at Candahar, though under the protection of Kohundil Khan, a brother of Dost Mahomed, then Ruler of that city. The people were dying of cholera. One of the Ulemas declared that "while Candahar was sullied by the presence of an infidel, the enemy of God and man, there would be no cessation of their affliction." M. Ferrier's house was besieged for three days; Kohundil Khan himself was obliged to take refuge in the citadel until a reinforcement of troops arrived and put an end to the insurrection. The same spirit of fanaticism still exercises unbounded sway over the large majority of the Afghan population, and though, under the coercive influence of a British force, it may be quiescent for a time, any favourable opportunity would bring its dormant elements into dangerous activity.

On the dissolution of Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission, Lord Lytton directed the assemblage of troops, with a view to early

ulterior operations. Shortly afterwards the answer of the Amír, dated 6th October, to the Viceroy's letter, conveyed by Nawab Gholam Hussein, was received. This answer of Sher Ali was couched in a tone of indignant remonstrance, complaining of letters transmitted to the Cabul Officials by the Commissioner of Peshawur, and of the harsh and breathless haste of the proceedings of Lord Lytton, but it was neither defiant nor insulting. The Viceroy, however, considered it as conveying a direct challenge, and would have immediately commenced hostilities.

Lord Canning's reluctance to enter upon warlike operations against Persia forms a marked contrast to Lord Lytton's precipitancy in hurrying on a collision with the Amír. Lord Canning writes to Mr. Vernon Smith, April 22nd, 1856:—"Do not be afraid of my being unduly hasty to punish Persia. Unless the Shah should steam up the Hooghly with Murray swinging at his yard arm, I hope that we shall be able to keep the peace until your instructions arrive." Lord Lytton sent a telegram to the Secretary of State counselling instant action, but her Majesty's Government very properly determined to make another effort to avert the calamities of war, and the Viceroy was directed, before crossing the frontier into Afghanistan, to demand an apology from Sher Ali in temperate language. Unfortunately the Ultimatum was not drawn up in a conciliatory tone, the acceptance of a permanent British Mission was still insisted upon, and a very few days were allowed for the Amír to make up his mind. Sher Ali returned no answer to the Ultimatum within the appointed time, the 20th of November, and on the 21st of that month the Viceroy issued his Proclamation of War. On the same day the British troops advanced and, as was to be expected, complete success crowned their operations. In spite of advantages of position, and the great natural obstacles of the country, the Afghan undisciplined tribes have always succumbed easily to the valour and discipline of a British force when well handled, and have never made any determined resistance like the Goorkahs or Sikhs, or even the Rajpoot and Mahratta armies. Many of the Afghans are individually brave, but they have no cohesion, no trust in

their leaders, who possess little military capacity. Each Afghan fights for his own hand, and they have always proved themselves contemptible enemies when they have been met in the open plains.

The Cabul catastrophe casts a dark shadow over past campaigns in Afghanistan; our constant easy victories during years of warfare faded out of sight, and Afghan prowess was much exaggerated. Sir William Nott wrote:—"The Army at Candahar has defeated the enemy in some sixteen actions, tranquillized the whole country, made every Afghan bend the knee, never met with a reverse, however outnumbered by the enemy."* It must be recollected also, in Sir Wm. Nott's days, the range of the British musket in the hands of the Sepoy was inferior to that of the Afghan weapon (the Jezail). It is a very different matter at the present time, when the superiority of our arms of precision gives us an immense advantage.

Any danger from an invasion of India by Afghans, which has been held up by some as a reason for an advance of frontier, may be dismissed as undeserving of serious consideration. Sir Henry Rawlinson tells us that "Aryans, Greeks and Scythians, Turks, Persians and Afghans, have, at different periods of history, swept down upon India, and that it has never been found possible to arrest the progress of the invader before he crossed the Indus." Sir Henry does not add, what is an important element in the calculation, that invaders of the present day would have to meet a very different enemy to those of former periods of history—a well-disciplined, well-equipped British army, composed of as fine troops as any in the world, and furnished with the latest arms of precision, and any amount of artillery and munitions of war. These troops, led by officers of the highest professional skill and capacity, acting under a strong united Government, abounding in all the resources that vast wealth can provide, in complete contrast to the Governments that existed at the time of successful invasions of India, which were, without exception, weak, corrupt, and divided amongst themselves, with traitors in their camps and Councils, who looked more to their own interests than to the defence of their country.

"Sir W. Nott's Life," Vol. II., p. 66.

In 1868, Sir Henry Rawlinson drew "an alarming picture of 50,000 Persian Sirbaz, supported by a Russian column, and hinted that it might be successful, owing to the prevalent disaffection of the Mohammedan population of India." In like manner, quite recently, he brings to notice the rumoured project of the Russian Minister of War to transfer bodily across the Caspian to Asterabad the army of the Caucasus for an attack on Herát; but in subsequent paragraphs he demolishes this scheme, "as all the Volga steamers would be quite insufficient to move 70,000 men," and, "without the co-operation of Persia, which could not be relied on, neither carriage nor provisions could be obtained for the march through Khorasan." If these important elements for the success of an invading army would not be available in Khorasan, the want of them would be likely to be still more felt in Afghanistan, where, as Sir Henry Lawrence wrote in 1856, "a large army would be starved in a week." In reference to Sir Richard Temple's statement of Mohammedan disaffection in India, Sir Henry Rawlinson characterizes the language used as "alarmist in tone, and exaggerated in substance." Many persons will be inclined to think that the threatened danger of 50,000 Persian Sirbaz in 1868, and of 70,000 Russians in 1878, may well be classed in the same category.

The immeasurable superiority of the power of the British Empire, compared with the petty disorganized kingdom of Cabul, is beyond dispute. When the season permits of a renewal of warlike operations, if the Afghans have not previously submitted, at more or less cost of life and money, according to circumstances, it is clear that we can overrun, and, if we choose, subjugate the country. But, as the Duke of Wellington said in reference to the campaign of 1839, "our difficulties will commence where our military successes end." The important question then arises, What do we intend to do? Has the Government any fixed policy, or is it drifting along, the creature of circumstances, to find itself, at no very distant period, saddled with responsibilities political and financial, which, at the outset, never entered into its calculation, and which may prove disastrous to the welfare and prosperity of

our Indian Empire? Lord Wellesley always spoke contemptuously of the folly of occupying a land of "rocks, sands, deserts, ice, and snow." Is this what Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Lytton have in contemplation? Lord Lytton states in his Proclamation that "with the Sirdars and people of Afghanistan this Government has still no quarrel, and desires none. They are absolved from all responsibility from the recent acts of the Amír, and as they have given no offence, so the British Government, wishing to respect their independence, will not willingly injure or interfere with them." General Roberts's announcement that the districts occupied by his troops are henceforth to be considered British territory is scarcely in accordance with the Proclamation of the Viceroy; but how far this apparent pledge of annexation commits the Government remains to be seen. Sher Ali has fled from Cabul, whether, like Dost Mahomed, to appear again upon the scene, time will show. Lord Northbrook's Government tells us in their despatch of 28th January, 1876, "there can be no question that the power of Amír Sher Ali Khan has been consolidated throughout Afghanistan in a manner unknown since the days of Dost Mahomed. Nowhere has intrigue or rebellion been able to make head in the Amír's dominions."

It was foreseen by those acquainted with Afghan politics that our advance into Afghanistan would shatter the Government. Our object was to have a strong and friendly State upon our North-Western frontier. The first result of our present policy is to weaken and disintegrate the cohesion, which, for the last ten years, had been assuming a more permanent form, and to let loose the elements of disorder, which have so generally prevailed in Afghanistan. Besides breaking up their Government, we have made the Afghans our enemies. As long as they believed that we had no intention of annexing any territory beyond the passes, they would have felt more fear of Russia than of ourselves. Our advance to Quettah alarmed them, and our present proceedings will have confirmed them in the view that it is our determination eventually to occupy their country. This is not a good foundation for a safe frontier. We desire to raise up a barrier against Russian intrigues. There could not have

been a better barrier than Afghan jealousy of interference and love of independence: all those feelings are now enlisted against us, and on the side of Russia. We may build fortresses at great cost, but unless we hold the country in strength, with a hostile population, our posts would be always in danger, and useless for the purpose for which we profess to advance them. And to what point are we to advance? A recent writer in the *Quarterly Review*, evidently master of the subject, sketches out what we may have to do:—"It might be necessary to take up strong and commanding positions in front at Mymeneh, at Bamian, and on the river of Badakshan, so as to overawe Turkestan, and compel the Russians to act on the defensive rather than the offensive."

If we contemplate the relative distances of Mymeneh, Bamian, and the river of Badakshan, how far removed they all are from our base, how great the difficulties must be of obtaining supplies, how vast the expense of maintaining garrisons in these remote provinces, and, after all, how inadequate such precautions must prove to overawe Turkestan, the British Government may well pause before it embarks upon such a crusade. Moreover, should these advanced posts be really threatened by Russia, reinforcements must be hurried up at all hazards, stores of all kinds, especially munitions of war, must be transported at enormous cost. Major Wood states that every round shot brought to Central Asia by the Russians is computed to have cost nearly two pounds sterling in transport. The difficulties of obtaining carriage and supplies for the convoys, regular communication with the rear being certain to be interrupted, would be almost insurmountable.

Those who are opposed to the present advance into Afghanistan do not believe in the wisdom of a policy that would seek to overawe Turkestan. They do not consider that Russia has either the power or the resources to undertake so gigantic an enterprise as a hostile invasion of India. Her hold on Central Asia requires consolidation. She has overrun rapidly a vast extent of territory sparsely inhabited, the inhabitants being chiefly nomad hordes—poor, fanatical, as likely as not to break out into insurrection should a favourable opportunity occur. India does not afford us

as secure a base of military operations as we could wish, but it is much more secure than Turkestan to the Russians; and all the resources of the British Empire are nearer and more easily available on the banks of the Indus than the resources of Russia on the banks of the Oxus. Mr. Schuyler tells us "that the revenues of Central Asia are insufficient to meet the expenses of administration, more and more taxes are demanded, and since the occupation of the country by the Russians, the condition of the population has not only not grown better, but on the contrary is every day getting worse and worse."

We may put aside any prospect of present danger from Russia, but it is said we must provide for the future. We must convert a haphazard into a scientific frontier. Until lately this so-called haphazard frontier was considered the best adapted for our security by the highest military authorities. At the present moment, it is believed that the preponderance of military authority is against an advance of frontier, even on purely strategical grounds. Admitting, however, that there may be a question on this point, as there are doubtless names of great weight on either side, there can be no question of the political and financial disadvantages that must result from a further extension of our Indian territories. These disadvantages, will, of course, prove of greater or less magnitude, according to the final arrangements made by Her Majesty's Government for the settlement of Afghanistan. If we are moderate in our demands, and forbearing in our hour of triumph, we may yet limit our responsibilities, and spare India a financial burden she is ill fitted to support. If, on the contrary, the easy success which has hitherto attended our arms becomes a snare and a delusion to lead us on to the permanent occupation of Afghan territory, and to direct intervention in the fathomless gulf of Afghan politics, the wisest Statesman may be at fault in rightly estimating future difficulties. Prominent among these difficulties is the establishment of satisfactory relations with the independent Afghan tribes inhabiting the mountain ranges between our present border, and the country owing allegiance to the Amír of Afghanistan.

These tribes have enjoyed their independence for hundreds of years; strong in their mountain fastnesses, inured to arms from their youth upwards, their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them, they cling with tenacity to their republican institutions, and have never bowed their necks to any settled government. They were a thorn in the side of the Mogul Emperors, and on several occasions inflicted severe defeats on armies sent against them.

In a night attack, for which the Afghans have always been famous, the Eusofzyes killed Bir Bal, one of Akber's favourite Generals, and destroyed many thousands of his troops. Mr. Elphinstone writes:— "They were never more formidable than in the reign of Aurungzebe; they resisted repeated attacks from the Kings of Persia and Cabul, and retain their turbulent independence undiminished to the present day." When Runjeet Sing pushed his dominions beyond the Indus, these tribes carried on an internecine war with the Sikhs, who vainly strove to coerce them, by building forts, and punishing them with Draconian severity. General Avitabile, Governor of Peshawur, dared not leave his capital, except accompanied by a large force. On the annexation of the Punjab the country afflicted with this chronic state of disorder passed under our rule, and ever since it has been the endeavour of the British Government to place our relations with these border tribes on a better footing. Progress in this work of conciliation and improvement has been necessarily slow; the habits of centuries are not overcome in a few years, and the administrative exigencies of a vast Empire are so various and extensive that attention could not be concentrated on one corner of our territories, so as to produce very rapid effects. But all acquainted with the subject will admit that very tangible results had been produced, the chief difficulties had been overcome, and greater results would have followed. Now, however, we are to commence afresh on a new course of action, we are to take all the passes into our own hands, and keep down by force of arms tens of thousands of these warlike and independent mountaineers. With this object we are to place isolated posts in exposed positions, where they will have

enough to do to take care of themselves, and will exercise little or no influence over the mountain fastnesses on every side of them, from whence the predatory tribes will have the opportunity of issuing forth to plunder convoys which must be continually passing to and fro to supply the garrisons.

While these tribes were in front of us, we could always meet them at an advantage, when they ventured into the plains. We generally had timely notice of their approach, and could collect a sufficient force to preclude the chance of any untoward accident; but with an immensely extended area of operations, it will be more difficult to use the same precautions, and to provide against all contingencies. Although they owed no allegiance to the Amir of Cabul, and set his authority at defiance whenever it suited their purpose, plundering the baggage of Dost Mahomed and Sher Ali, as they plundered the property of every one who trespassed on their confines whenever they saw an opening, still the rulers of Afghanistan had a certain amount of influence, which when exerted in favour of peace and order was not without its value. In rendering the Afghans hostile to us we add another disturbing element to the task of conciliating the tribes and pacifying the frontier, and also another element of discontent with our rule, which may prove contagious at a moment when we are least prepared with means of repression. The native army, reorganized since the mutiny, contains within its ranks a larger proportion of Mohammedan soldiers, many of them enlisted from the tribes on the frontier. When stationed amongst their own native hills, and employed to coerce their own countrymen, the loyalty of these troops will be put to a test to which in its full extent it has not hitherto been subjected, and which is not without danger. Twenty years ago we passed through a tremendous ordeal, and through God's mercy emerged from it triumphantly. What has happened may happen again. If at that period large bodies of our troops had been stationed in forts and garrisons far distant beyond the passes in Afghanistan, it may be left to any reasonable person to determine whether our difficulties would not have been greatly increased.

While there is danger in this respect, on the other hand service in Afghanistan will always be unpopular with natives of Hindostan of all castes and classes. The Sikhs and Goorkhas will view with inveterate dislike any prolonged residence at such a distance from their homes, which involves separation from their wives and families, in an uncongenial climate where all the necessaries of life are so expensive. The Goorkhas are especially sensitive in regard to separation from their families. If the service in Afghanistan is distasteful to native troops, much more so must it prove to the numerous class of camp followers so essential in India to the well-being and efficiency of an army in the field. The sufferings of these poor creatures in our last advance to Cabul and in the disastrous retreat were dreadful, and if rumour speaks truly, the heaviest burden has also fallen upon them in the present campaign.

All these causes of future embarrassment and difficulty connected with an advance of frontier are overlooked by many persons who have neither the time nor the opportunity to study this important question. In the lapse of years the lessons of the former war in Afghanistan have been forgotten by the people of England, but its baneful effects have left a deep impression on the minds of the people of India. This impression is not likely to be effaced, or to conduce to their contentment, when, according to the decision of Her Majesty's Government, they are called upon to pay additional taxes in order to defray the expenses of the present war. At the time Lord Canning was leaving India, Raja Dinkur Rao wrote a memorandum for him, full of suggestive remarks, from a native point of view, as to the policy the British Government should pursue towards its native subjects. He says:—"To every Government the foundations of security are twofold—1st, the strength of the army; 2nd, the contentment of its subjects. Both these are essential. Then after enumerating the benefits conferred upon India by British rule, he writes:—"While all these things are before the subjects in favour of a Government which does so much for their comfort, they are still greatly dissatisfied with the severity of some of the regulations which are against their

customs, and with various kinds of stamp duties and taxes, almost all classes are very much bewildered from being harassed in all the ordinary occupations of their lives. By this means the people have forgotten the goodness of the British Government, the love which they once entertained for it, and have begun to prefer the tyranny of Native Princes." He goes on to complain of the income tax, the license tax, and the heavier salt tax, as especially obnoxious to the people, and adding to causes of former discontent. All those acquainted with India are aware that increased taxation becomes more and more dangerous to the tranquillity of the country. Several of the distinguished Statesmen who have filled the high office of Viceroy have brought this subject, of late years, to the notice of the Home Authorities in forcible language. Owing to the recurrence of famines, the depreciation of silver, the general depression of trade, and other causes, India, at the present moment, is less able than ever to support additional financial burdens, and the cost of an unnecessary war is not likely to render them more palatable to native opinion. What would entail a very light pressure on England might prove of serious moment in India. Lord Salisbury has himself stated:—"The difference between England and India in matters of finance is this, that in England you can raise a large increase of taxation without in the least degree endangering our institutions, whereas you cannot do so in India." According to a statement in Parliament by the Under Secretary of State for India, based upon a calculation made by the Indian Government as to what the war was likely to cost, the expenditure to be incurred within the present financial year, which closes on the 31st of March, 1879, was put down at £950,000. And as there is an estimated surplus of £1,550,000, the Secretary of State adds:—"It must be perfectly obvious that the Indian Government could pay the whole cost of the war during the present year without adding a shilling to the taxation or the debt of the country."

It may be observed that the gist of the matter is not what may be actually expended from the Treasury on the war up to the 31st of March, but what will be the whole expenditure by the time the

war is brought to a conclusion. It is to be hoped that the sanguine expectations of the Government may be realized, but those who recollect the expenditure incurred in the last war in Afghanistan may be permitted to express a doubt upon this vital point.

From the published Parliamentary papers, it appeared there were ten millions of accumulated surplus in the various treasuries of India, when the war in 1839 began. Not only was this entirely expended by the end of the year 1841, but a loan of five millions had to be raised at an unusually high rate of interest. Sir Robert Peel stated in Parliament, on the 23rd June, 1842, that there had been a surplus revenue, just before the commencement of the war, of a million and a half, which, in 1840-41, was converted into a deficit of £2,324,000. In his letter to Lord Aberdeen, of September 1841, Sir Henry Willock stated that so severely were the finances of Calcutta pressed, that a stoppage of payment at Fort William was at one time contemplated by the Supreme Council.

On the 6th April, 1842, the Court of Directors brought to the notice of the President of the Board of Control, that the Government of India had intimated their intention "to discontinue their remittances for the supply of the Home Treasury, by means of advances upon goods hypothecated to the Court. The Local Government have been compelled to adopt this course by their financial difficulties, which have been wholly caused by the expensive operations in which they have been engaged beyond the Indus."

The total military expenditure of India, during the five years ending with 1837-38, amounted to a little more than thirty-eight millions sterling; in the following five years it exceeded forty-eight millions. It was affirmed, on good authority, that nearly a million sterling was expended on camels alone—70,000 of these animals were reported to have perished during the campaign. The loss of horses also was very great. Major Hough states that in one day it was requisite to shoot fifty-three horses. Want of forage for the cattle, and want of provisions for the troops and followers, characterized the former advance into Afghanistan. It is well known that in many parts of the country the population

itself is constantly in a state of semi-starvation. There is no reason to believe that the productiveness of Afghanistan has increased of late years, but, on the contrary, that it has diminished. What must, therefore, be the difficulty and expense of procuring supplies for men and cattle during a long campaign? British energy, and a lavish expenditure of money will, no doubt, overcome these difficulties; but all this will contribute to swell the cost of the war, and lead to further embarrassments.

Sir James Outram writes, in his rough notes, on 29th April, 1839 :—"The army is in great distress for want of provisions, six days' supplies only remain in the Commissariat stores, and the merchants of Candahar, who profess to have nothing in reserve, retail wheat flour in small quantities, at the rate of two seers (4 lbs.) the rupee, everything else being proportionately dear." Again:—"Provisions are daily becoming scarcer, and more dear, and flour has actually attained the exorbitant rate of a single seer for the rupee, a price which is, of course, quite beyond the means of our impoverished followers. No grain has as yet been obtained for the horses." "The effects of the unwholesome food which the wretched followers have been obliged to consume, is everywhere painfully manifest."

He had previously written:—"The followers of the army were compelled to eke out their subsistence by picking up weeds." Subsequently the followers received their rations from the Commissariat in the same manner as the native troops, a very merciful measure; but the enormous expense entailed upon the Government by such a concession, with provisions at famine prices, may well be imagined. The effect of the exorbitant price of food of all descriptions, and the consequent increased scarcity, must have been to inflict great hardship and suffering on the poorer classes of the population of the country, and on classes with fixed stipends; and Sir William Macnaghten states that this was one of the causes of British unpopularity. In the present campaign it is believed that the native troops who have crossed the frontier receive rations from the Commissariat, as in the previous war. When it is recollected that the number of troops in the three

armies now employed exceeds those sent forward on the former invasion of Afghanistan, some idea may be formed of the expenditure likely to be incurred. In order to reduce this expenditure to the lowest point, Lord Lytton has not shrunk from the risk of denuding India of its garrisons, resorting to the questionable expedient of being indebted to Native Princes for contingents of troops to fill their places. Lord Dalhousie, in his minute of 28th February, 1856, observed :—"No prudent man who has any knowledge of Eastern affairs, would ever venture to predict the maintenance of continued peace within our Eastern possessions. Experience—frequent, hard, and recent experience—has taught us that war from without, or rebellion from within, may at any time be raised against us, in quarters where they were the least to be expected, and by the most feeble and unlikely instruments."

As far as can be ascertained, we have now seventeen regiments of British cavalry and infantry, and thirty-eight regiments of native cavalry and infantry, and about twenty-five batteries of artillery employed in Afghanistan, or on the very confines of our North-West frontier, in support of the troops in advance. In order to replace this large portion of the garrison of India, two regiments of British infantry, which were to have come home, have been detained, and fifteen thousand recruits have been added to the native army. If trouble should arise in the interior, or at the other extremity of our dominions, the Government might find itself in a dilemma to provide troops to meet the emergency. By the proposed advance of frontier, we multiply greatly the chances of collision both from within and from without, and impose upon India the absolute necessity of paying for a larger proportion of European troops, as any force stationed in Afghanistan must be chiefly composed of British regiments. On a very moderate estimate, even the occupation of posts above the passes would entail an additional burden on the revenues of India of more than a million sterling a year; and, in the event of a further advance, which would most probably occur, enhanced expenditure would of course follow. The want of means has been the real reason why important works connected with the strengthen-

ing of our North-Western frontier, which have been for a series of years recommended by the highest military authorities, have not been executed. The completion of our railway communication to Peshawur, the construction of bridges across the Indus, the erection of fortifications in suitable positions, have all been constantly before the Government, and only delayed from financial considerations. These works relate only to the frontier ; but how many undertakings of the highest utility throughout India are obliged to be indefinitely postponed from the same cause? Already, at the very outset of the present war, the local Governments have been compelled to issue resolutions suspending the execution of all public works and grants of money until the state of the finances will permit of sanction being accorded.

To use the words of Lord Sandhurst, "it cannot be too often repeated that the occupation of Afghanistan, on account of the financial difficulty, is the stoppage of progress in India." Her Majesty's Government, it is but fair to conclude, have an equal interest with previous Governments in the welfare and prosperity of India, and in undertaking the grave responsibility of an advance into Afghanistan, they must believe that such a step is imperatively necessary for the safety of our Eastern dominions. But they cannot be blind to the impoverished state of India, nor to the political risks to be incurred by any attempt to impose additional taxation. They must therefore desire, as much as the strongest opponents of their present policy, to reduce to a minimum the burden about to be thrown on the Indian finances. It is clear that, however costly the expenditure incurred in the advance into Afghanistan, the permanent occupation of the country will entail a far heavier pressure upon the revenues of India ; those revenues, according to Sir John Strachey, possessing "no true surplus over expenditure to cover the many contingencies to which a great country is exposed." What, then, is the course to be pursued? What is the solution of the present difficult conjuncture of affairs, which is likely to be attended with the fewest political responsibilities, and the smallest probable future expenditure?

It must be admitted that the difficulties to be surmounted are

very great, and depend to a certain extent upon contingencies not to be foreseen. The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, the end is often beyond our own control. The first thing to be achieved is to bring the war to an honourable conclusion. The brilliant success that has attended the operations already undertaken bear ample witness to the gallantry and endurance of our troops, and to the promptitude, skill, and judgment of the generals in command. Whatever our armies may be called upon to perform, it is quite certain they will do their duty with the same valour and efficiency which they have always shown in all previous campaigns in every quarter of the globe. Peace, therefore, will be secured, either by an early submission of the Afghan leaders, or, after a short delay, as soon as the season permits of warlike movements. Hostilities being ended, and our power vindicated, the grand feature of our policy should be moderation in our demands.

Lord Lytton has proclaimed to the world that "with the Sirdars and people of Afghanistan the British Government has no quarrel, and desires none;" and that "it will respect their independence." Let us act up to this declaration by insisting upon nothing that will wound the national feeling, and thus tend to keep alive a spirit of bitterness, and sow the seeds of future dissension. Meanwhile, now is the time to place our relations with Russia, in regard to these countries, upon a permanent and definite footing. We have hitherto never gone to the root of this great question with Russia, we have dealt with things on the surface in a vague undecided manner. Mr. Schuyler, who, it may be observed, is perhaps not wholly impartial, but whose opinion nevertheless carries weight, writes:—"The attitude of England towards Russia, with regard to Central Asia, can hardly be called a dignified one. There are constant questions, protests, demands for explanation, and even threats, at least in the newspapers, but nothing is ever done." Subsequently to the understanding entered into at the period of Mr. Gladstone's administration, Russia certainly endeavoured to fasten upon England the responsibility of controlling Sher Ali, but this was

entirely repudiated by Mr. Gladstone in his important speech of 23rd April, 1873. Russia then let it be understood that, if England had preserved her freedom of action, Russia had done the same. Again, Mr. Schuyler writes, evidently speaking from a Russian point of view:—"Unless some new arrangement should be made, Russia has a perfect right, in case of troubles on the Oxus, to cross it and inflict punishment on the troops and provinces of Sher Ali." A new arrangement should undoubtedly be made between the two Governments, not a mere understanding, but a binding engagement. In order, however, that negotiations should have the best prospect of a happy termination, England should bear in mind the advice of a friendly French Minister (quoted by Sir Charles Dilke in a recent speech):—"It is of the most essential importance that the English Government should avoid, both in attitude and in language, everything in the least like arrogance." We should approach the discussion of this important question in no spirit of dictation nor of jealous rivalry, but on the footing of the perfect equality which belongs to two of the greatest nations in the world. We require nothing more from Russia than that she should enter into permanent and definite engagements, in accordance with her former assurances, with regard to Afghanistan, we on our part binding ourselves to respect the integrity and independence of the Afghan kingdom, and to abstain from all interference with the affairs of Central Asia beyond the Oxus. We should also undertake to exercise our influence to prevent the Ruler of Afghanistan from giving offence to Russia, or embroiling himself with his neighbours, and we should seek no commercial advantages to the prejudice of Russia. It is so much to the interest of both countries that such an engagement should exist that it is difficult to imagine that any serious obstacle could arise to prevent its conclusion.

We proceed, then, to deal with Afghanistan. Weighty arguments have been put forward by the highest military authorities against any advance of frontier in that direction. General Sir Henry Norman, himself a high authority, writes in a recent number of the *Fortnightly Review*:—"While many opinions

have been given as to the folly of advancing our frontier, it seems an undoubted fact that no opposite opinion ever was expressed by any of the able Governors-General who have held sway in India up to the arrival of Lord Lytton, by any Commander-in-Chief in India, by any Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, the officer through whom, until 1876, all Cabul affairs used to be transacted, or by any member of the Supreme Council, before which all important questions affecting the Indian Empire come. Many officers in these positions have left on record the strongest possible objections to a forward movement except as an operation of war." In reference to the occupation of any post beyond the Khyber, General Hamley writes :—"There is much to be said against it, nothing for it. It would be a source not of strength but of weakness." He then goes on to say on the question of meeting danger from invasion :—"I should feel confident of the result even in the Valley of the Indus, I think our position vastly improved by the occupation of Quettah, but I should think it all we could desire if we occupied Candahar." There is no doubt that Candahar, converted into a strong fortress, and held by an adequate garrison of British troops, would prove a formidable obstacle to an invading army. Its situation in the most fertile portion of Afghanistan, commanding the three roads to India, offers great advantages in a purely military point of view. But cogent political and financial reasons forbid the extension of our frontier, and enjoin the preservation, if possible, of an independent Afghan Kingdom intermediately between our own boundary and that of the Russian possessions in Central Asia. It is a subject of regret that we advanced to Quettah, more particularly without the consent of the Amír, who, if properly approached in the first instance might have acceded to our wishes ; but having done so, and having, under treaty with the Khan of Khelat, an undeniable right to locate troops in his territories, it may not be advisable that we should withdraw from a position of strategical importance, both with reference to the control of the Afghans and Belooches and to ulterior contingencies. Whether the town of Quettah itself in respect to salubrity

and other considerations fulfils all the conditions needed to render it the most eligible position we could occupy can only be determined by competent professional advisers on the spot. If not, there could doubtless be found in its vicinity some other locality where a large entrenched camp could be formed, which, held in strength, would secure all the required objects defensive and offensive. Our first duty should be to complete the communications with our base, including the railroad to Dadur, and a bridge across the Indus at Sukkur, with posts in support of adequate strength along the line to the rear.

These works, essential on military grounds, would be highly beneficial also commercially. Our domination of the Bolan and the other passes near at hand, and our necessarily more intimate connection with the countries beyond, by rendering traffic more secure, and by guaranteeing freedom from vexatious imposts and restrictions, would give a great impulse to trade. Amongst the measures to be taken on the cessation of hostilities, and the renewal of relations with the Ruler of Afghanistan, there should be an arrangement for placing British commercial interests on a proper footing, and for protecting them against any hostile tariffs or immoderate transit duties. In the absence of official information it is difficult to determine how far the Government is committed to annexation by the reported announcement of General Roberts that the inhabitants of the Khost and Khurum Valleys were henceforward to consider themselves British subjects. These raids upon outlying districts of the Amír's kingdom, which have been the cause of an immense amount of human suffering, without exercising any perceptible influence on the main purpose of the war, are to be lamented. The annexation of this territory, which is not likely to produce sufficient revenue to pay the cost of administration, and is certain to require additional troops to protect that portion of the population which is peacefully disposed, would prove a source of future trouble and increased expenditure. It would be well that the British garrisons should be withdrawn within the original border-line of British territory on the right bank of the Indus. In fact, we should eschew all annexation of

Afghan territory. Our object should be to conclude a treaty with whatever Ruler the Afghan nation may select, without interference with the integrity of their dominions or with their independence. We should beware of setting up a nominee of our own, but leave the choice to the Afghans themselves. In order to afford them a convincing proof of our desire to maintain their independence, we should make the concession to their prejudices of withdrawing our demand for the residence of British Officers at Cabul, and in other Afghan cities. We should be content with a Mohammedan Envoy of rank and influence at Cabul. His salary should be increased and his establishment placed on a much more liberal scale than has hitherto been the practice. Selected Native Agents of intelligence might also be stationed at Herát, Balkh, or in any other Afghan towns which might appear desirable.

It was a cardinal maxim of the policy of the Nepaul Government for many years to keep the secrets of their own fastnesses unspied into by us, and a great jealousy of Europeans still exists in that country; in Burmah, also, and even in Kashmir, there is an undercurrent of dislike to the presence of British officers. Why should we then insist on the compliance of the Afghans with a condition which it is clear is so repugnant to the feelings and prejudices of the Chiefs and people? The time may come, and in the interests of humanity and civilization all will desire to hasten it, when the Afghans themselves may be willing to waive the objection on which they have hitherto so strongly insisted, and when this wild fanatical people will be brought under the ameliorating influences which British rule exercises on the population of India. Much has been done within the last half-century, but there is still sufficient work to tax to the utmost British energies, and to satisfy British ambition, without adding more territory to our already overgrown Eastern Empire. It remains to recapitulate the points which it has been sought to establish in the foregoing pages.

1st. That the settled policy of former Administrations, composed of both parties in the State, in regard to the defence of the North-Western frontier of India, has been, without sufficient cause, departed from by Lord Lytton, acting under instructions of the present Ministry.

2nd. That the danger apprehended from Russian aggression has been greatly exaggerated, and that the measures adopted in consequence are calculated to prejudice the best interests of our Indian Empire.

3rd. That the hasty, inconsiderate action of Lord Lytton precipitated hostilities, and led to an unnecessary, impolitic, and unjust war.

4th. That any annexation of Afghan territory would increase our political and financial difficulties, and entail a grievous burden on the revenues of India.

5th. That an attempt to secure more effectual hold on the passes lying between our border line and Afghanistan, and to coerce the mountain tribes by placing military posts in their fastnesses, would fail in its object, except at a cost too burthensome to be sustained.

6th. That the expenses of the present war will far exceed the estimate of the Government, and that in the impoverished state of India, increased taxation may be attended with most serious results.

The essential condition of progress and improvement in India is the continuance of peace. However erroneous the policy enjoined by Lord Salisbury, it is possible that more temper, prudence, and forbearance, on the part of Lord Lytton, might have averted its worst consequences. In Lord Lytton's hands it culminated in war, and it contains the germs of future wars. Mr. Gladstone wrote of our Indian Empire, in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review* :—"This astonishing fabric was in the main built up by a mercantile Company, with secondary aid from the counsels and control of the Government, and under the guidance of the practical good sense which is so remarkable in our countrymen, except when some peculiar *Até* bewilders and misleads them." And again :—"The Company delivered India from the flighty genius of Lord Ellenborough, who leant to the ostentatious policy that has lately received, upon more dangerous ground, a more serious development. The toleration they established was one only too wide. They boldly gave education to the

people. They established a Free Press half a century ago. They laid the foundation of the railway system. They discouraged to the best of their ability aggression on the Native Princes and on neighbouring territories. Their policy was, in the best sense, Conservative, and at the time when they handed over their high office to the Government, there was not a point, in the whole of our case with India, at which we could say they had neglected duty or precaution, or had either feigned or courted dangers." The East India Company may well be proud of this meed of praise from England's greatest and noblest living Statesman. Its calm, equable, sagacious, administration typified admirably English sobriety, moderation, and practical good sense. The names of its illustrious servants are enshrined in the foremost roll of English Worthies. Mr. Gladstone's allusion to the "flighty genius of Lord Ellenborough" suggests an apt parallel to the distinguishing feature of the intellectual constitution of the present Viceroy. In a letter to the Duke of Wellington, dated 21st January, 1844, conceived in the same spirit of pride and self-sufficiency which dictated Lord Lytton's haughty message to the Amír of Cabul, Lord Ellenborough, wrote of the Court of the Directors of the East India Company:—"I am satisfied that if they were left to themselves they would lose the country in three months." In little more than three months the Court of Directors, in the interests of the good Government of India intrusted to their keeping by the nation, took upon themselves the grave responsibility of recalling Lord Ellenborough from his high office. Parliament and the people of England ratified the act. It may be confidently affirmed that, under the East India Company's direction of Indian affairs, where party prejudices and prepossessions never intruded, Lord Lytton's impulsive action, disregard of established forms of procedure, and tendency to personal Government, would not have been lightly passed over. In the fulness of time it is believed that the practical good sense of the English nation will pronounce a just judgment on this second Afghan War, and on the merits of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration.

* page 419 of Lord Colchester's "Indian Administrations of Lord Ellenborough."

THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.

BY

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THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.

It seems strange to the generation that learned the lessons of the first Afghan war, then sunk so deep into the national heart, that a second similar war should have been waged for precisely the same object, namely, the establishment of a friendly power on the north-west frontier of India. Then, as now, we sought to establish such a power by fair means or foul—by persuasion if possible, and failing that, by force. But so it is: we have embarked in such a war, and we must face the questions involved in it.

THE SITUATION BEFORE THE WAR.

Before this war I have often expressed my own views regarding the north-west frontier; they may be put in very brief compass. I have always thought and said that if the mountains of Afghanistan had been occupied by a people in any degree resembling those of the Himalayas,—if the Afghans had in any degree resembled in character the people of Cashmere or of the hill country of the

Kangra, Simla, or Kumaon districts, or even those of Nepaul—I should have thought it extremely desirable that we should in some shape occupy that country and so complete our defences ; but we know by painful experience that the Afghans are a people of a totally different character—turbulent—bred from infancy to the use of arms—and with a passion for independence in which they are exceeded by no people in this world. This love of independence is such as to make them intolerant, not only of foreign rule, but almost of any national, tribal or family rule. They are a people among whom every man would be a law unto himself. Experience has shown, too, that these traits are not of a passing kind ; the Afghans are not to be tamed by subjection and peace ; nothing induces them to surrender that love of independence which seems to be the essence of their nature. That being the character of the people occupying so difficult and inaccessible a country, I have thought that the difficulties and expense of any attempt to meddle with that country far outweigh the advantages. I have thought, too, that the passion for independence of a people occupying such a country is the best safeguard of our frontier, so long as the Afghans have reason to think that we, taught by experience, are less aggressive and less likely to encroach upon them than their other neighbours. Of these neighbours the most formidable are no doubt the Russians. Some day, possibly, the

Russians may be formidable both to Afghanistan and to India ; but at present, as I have always said, separated as they are in Turkestan from their resources by immense and pathless deserts, they certainly are not dangerous to us and cannot be dangerous till they have established themselves much more thoroughly, and have constructed railways and other means of communication to the foot of the Afghan mountains on their side, as completely as we have constructed or are constructing such communications on our side. That being so, I have said that we may well play a waiting game; that it is not for us to fly to dangers and expenses which are certain in order to avoid future dangers which are uncertain. For it is not certain that Russia will hold together for another fifty years as a great military empire ; that she will establish a complete dominion in Central Asia; that she will find the means of constructing great communications in vast territories which are as unproductive as India is productive. I think that recent events in Russia go very far indeed to fortify this view. There is evidently a great seething and fermentation there which may any day lead to revolution and disruption, and must at any rate greatly hinder the development of a strong aggressive power.

No doubt it is in every way most desirable that we should be on friendly terms with the Afghans. It always is desirable that we should cultivate

friendly relations with our neighbours — and I would certainly cultivate those relations with the Afghans, as far as the tribal divisions among themselves and the complications and uncertainties of their mode of government will permit. The instability of all Afghan rule and Afghan rulers is, however, such that I confess that I did not like even the approaches which Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo made towards political intimacy with the ruler of Cabul. Looking to the position of that potentate and to the Afghan character, I have thought that for political purposes it would be better to leave him to come to us when he wanted our countenance and assistance, rather than that we should show our anxiety to deal with him. When you approach an Afghan to make terms with him, you are very apt to turn his head, and you find the more he gets the more he wants.

THE PRESENT SITUATION.

Recent events have no doubt very much altered the situation. Whether one may or may not approve of the steps by which the present war was brought about, that war is a fact which we must take into account in dealing with this question. Looking at the enormous difficulties and expense of a permanent occupation of Afghanistan, I still think that it would be better that we should return

to our own Indian border ; but I admit that it would now require very great moral courage to do this. The difficulties of our position have been immensely increased by what has lately passed ; and if before this war there were arguments in favour of an advance, no doubt those arguments are now immensely strengthened. We have come more into collision with the independent tribes than with the ruler of Cabul, and things have passed which must go very far to create among those tribes a feeling of burning hostility towards us. We have caused the breaking up of the government established at Cabul, such as it was ; and we seem to have insisted on lopping off further portions of the Cabul territory,—a measure which must very greatly increase the difficulty of any ruler of Cabul to exercise any semblance of power over the country at large. After what has recently passed we must expect that the Afghans, for a very long time to come, will think that the Russians are a less evil than ourselves, and as against us they will be at any time ready to throw themselves into the arms of Russia. Above all, what I fear is that, whereas up to this time the Afghan tribes are provided with nothing better than the old-fashioned firearms, it can hardly be but that in these days of cheap arms of precision, which enterprising traders are so ready to disseminate over the world, they must before long become possessed of such arms. Even if peace and the semblance of political friendliness

should be maintained between the Russians and ourselves, we can hardly hope that the Russians will or can stop the traffic in arms for our benefit. I confess that I think the strongest argument for dealing with the Afghans at the present time is that we may do so before they obtain arms of precision. Under these circumstances, I am not sanguine enough to hope that Her Majesty's Government will go back to the lines which they would have done better never to have left. What present indications lead me to fear is that, situated as they are, with very much on their hands, and divided between those who would go very far and those who would cautiously hold back, they are halting and in danger of a half-and-half policy, which to my judgment is the worst of all. My experience is, that if you have to deal with hornets only two courses are possible—one, not to stir them up or aggravate them, the other to smoke them out and take the nest. To stir them up, put your hand into the nest and keep it there is not what a wise man would do ; yet that is what I am afraid of, if our present position is maintained.

At any rate, I think it must be apparent that this question which has troubled us so long is not now to be met by temporary expedients. We must take a broad view of the whole subject and try to settle it on lines that shall be lasting. It is in that spirit that I desire to approach it. The subject is one which has interested and occupied me for

upwards of thirty years. It is just thirty years ago that in the year 1849 I put forth views on the subject which attracted a good deal of attention at the time; and I trust that after having matured those views in the interval from that time to this, I may not be presumptuous in submitting them for what they are worth.

The first fallacy against which I think it is necessary that there should be warning, is that of supposing that we can find or establish a strong and friendly government of Afghanistan with whom we may make terms. My belief is that in truth no such government is now possible. It is, as it were, contrary to the nature of things. To explain that view I must make a very brief historical retrospect.

THE HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN.

Till very modern times no such country as Afghanistan was known to the world. Most of the territory which we now call Afghanistan was part of the province known to the Persians and Arabs as Khorassan. The Afghans were only known as tribes occupying some of the more hilly and inaccessible parts of the country, and from among whom successive rulers have drawn mercenary soldiers, many of whom have colonized in India. These Afghan tribes were not found in

the Caucasian range to the north of the country, but only in the mountains further south. Their origin is a puzzle to ethnographers. They are certainly a people quite different from the Persians on the one side and the Indians on the other. Their language is not a mixture of the languages of their neighbours, but a distinct language with very marked characteristics of its own, though it is generally classed as an Aryan tongue. These are the people whom we, using the Persian term scarcely known to themselves, call Afghans, while they call themselves Pathans or Puktans and their language Pashtoo or Puktoo. They have a myth that they are descended from the Jews, but the fact is that the Mahommedan religion is so much connected with Jewish origins that a good many Mahommedan tribes claim a Jewish descent; as do a good many others a descent from Secunder or Alexander. Their more distinct traditions ascribe their original seat to the mountains of Ghore, but it is not very clear where that is—apparently to the north-west of Candahar. At any rate, in times before history they had occupied all the hill country east of Candahar and Ghuznee, and thence to the borders of India. It was not, however, till comparatively modern times—say, since the beginning of the sixteenth century,—that they advanced across the Cabul River and occupied not only the valleys of Jellalabad and Peshawur and some of the submontane country,

know to have lasted a long time, though its history is lost; then the revived Persian empire; then the Arab dominion; and then the invasion and occupation of the country by Turk and Mongol conquerors. Mahmoud of Ghuznee, the first conqueror of India, no doubt took his title from a place in Afghanistan, but we know that he was a Turk who had come there as a conqueror, and thence conquered India. Subsequently some dynasties of Afghan origin ruled in India, but these dynasties were founded by soldiers of fortune who had risen to power under the Turks. The Moguls, too, acquired Afghanistan, or rather, I should say, the country we now call Afghanistan, first, and India afterwards; and while they reigned over India they still held most of the Afghan country, by means of the resources which they drew from India. Much trouble they had in dealing with the Afghans, and it was only the revenues of their great foreign territories which enabled them to keep the tribes in check, partly by bribing them and partly by controlling them; but sometimes they wholly failed to control them and suffered great disasters at the hands of the tribes. They very much utilized the Afghan soldiers, as the English Government did the Highlanders of Scotland. It may be said that under all the Mahommedan rulers of India the Afghan soldiers very much took the place which is now occupied by our European soldiers; and thus

it was that they found their advantage in serving the emperors. It must also be remembered that both the employers and the employed professed the same Mahommedan religion, and altogether the emperors had much more in common with their subjects than we can have,—so that they had in that respect great advantage over us. The Afghans who settled in India became Indianized and civilized, and acted as a sort of military colonists in support of the Mahommedan government.

In the decadence of the Mogul government the Afghan tribes again asserted their independence, and the great Ghilzye tribe at one time overran Persia, but the Persians again under Nadir Shah conquered and annexed Afghanistan. It was after the death of Nadir Shah that the Afghan Ahmed Shah Duranee established a kingdom of his own, and then we first hear of the country of Afghanistan. Ahmed Shah became a great conqueror, claimed the title of Shah or King, and as we know repeatedly invaded India, broke the Mahratta power in the year 1759, and apparently had India at his feet. It has always been one of the greatest puzzles of history why he failed to take advantage of that position. I believe the truth was that his dominion had so little strength or union among his own Afghans at home, that it was inherently weak. He was strong to conquer for a time, but he could not keep his forces together. Under his

successors his kingdom soon became very weak. Although he had left Dehli to the Mogul, and had abandoned the Empire of India, still the country to the west of Delhi—the Punjaub and all the plains of the Indus, with Cashmere and the hill country to the north,—were attached to Afghanistan. But very soon the Sikhs made themselves independent in the Eastern Punjaub; and when in the present century Runjeet Singh rose to power as a great Sikh ruler, and established a regularly disciplined army, he soon conquered the Western and Southern Punjaub, Mooltan and Cashmere; and eventually crossing the Indus he conquered the proper Afghan country of Peshawur, Kohat, and the rest at the foot of the hills. Sind fell away from the Afghan kingdom, Beloochistan became independent, and altogether it was sadly reduced.

Without the command of money it is impossible to control the Afghan tribes, and so it was that when the dominions of the King of Cabul were thus lopped off, they expelled their king and he became a refugee in our territory, till we tried to reinstate him and brought him to an unhappy death at Cabul, in 1842, under circumstances which are well known. After the expulsion of the Shah, the family of Dost Mahomed did not claim the title of King, but were content with the lower title of Ameer or chief. In truth there was not one Ameer, but several Ameers. Cabul was under one ruler, Candahar under another, Herat under

another, and Balkh for a time was lost. Dost Mahomed was a very remarkable man, and he gradually recovered all these places, but it was not till the very last days of his life that he took Herat. Neither he nor any other Ameer have made the least pretence of ruling over the great mass of the Afghan tribes who hold the country adjoining India from Swat in the north to Quettah in the south. I mean, not only that they have exercised no effective rule, but that there has been no pretence of any feudal sovereignty over the tribes; on the contrary, unable to restrain or influence them, the Ameer has always disclaimed all responsibility for them.

When, after the vicissitudes and changes of fortune subsequent to Dost Mahomed's death, Shere Ali at last established himself as the successor of the Dost, he certainly showed some personal strength and courage, if not other qualities. With the aid of the money and arms which he obtained from us, and with our example before him, he did something towards establishing what was supposed to be a reformed system and a regular army, and certainly held his own a great deal longer than might have been expected; but the proof of the utter rottenness of the reformed system is evident in the result of his collision with us. His power fell to pieces at the very first touch. He did not fight at all. His government was, as it proved, hopelessly feeble and rotten.

The truth is, that in Afghanistan the only chance of exercising a considerable authority is when power falls into the hands of a very strong and wise man with money at his command. Without plenty of money, not an angel from heaven could rule that country.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF AFGHANISTAN.

Let us try to realize something of the geography and people of this country which we call Afghanistan. In doing so we must always remember that the Afghanistan of the Ameer is not by any means the country of the Afghan people. On the contrary, most of the Afghan people are outside the Ameer-ship, while the Ameer has ruled over a good many countries which are not Afghan in their population.

The geography is so complicated a congeries of hills that it is very difficult to describe it. To the north is the great Caucasian range. Any one who looks at the map of Asia sees that the great backbone, represented to the north of India by the Himalayas, is continued by the Indian Caucasus or Hindoo Coosh to the north of Cabul, and thence through the north of Persia and the Kurd country into Armenia and the Russian Caucasian province. To the north-east of Afghanistan the peaks approach very nearly the highest in the world,

reaching the altitude of upwards of 28,000 feet; and on the borders of that country the great peak of Nanga Parbat, or "naked mountain"—a prominent object from the Peshawur Valley—is marked on Colonel Walker's map as 26,629 feet high. The passes over the higher ranges are never less than 16,000 or 17,000 feet. We have no survey of the range to the north of Afghanistan, but no doubt it somewhat diminishes in height as it proceeds westward. The easiest pass north-west of Cabul, leading to Bameean and Turkestan, is a little over 12,000 ft. high; and the neighbouring mountains are about 20,000 ft. West of that again we know little of the mountains, but they seem to be inaccessible till, as the range approaches Persia, it becomes for a space considerably lower. Connecting with this range, just after it leaves India, is the mountainous country of Afghanistan, in which, from north to south, one range succeeds another in close proximity. The Sufeid Koh range south of the Cabul River is upwards of 15,000 ft. high, while the ranges of the Suleimanee farther south, so far as we know them, seem to run to 11,000 and 12,000 ft.

It is the characteristic of many mountain ranges that they are, as it were, tilted up on one side, with high elevated plateaus on the other side, often containing lakes without an exit. That is notably so in regard to the Himalayas—very precipitous on the Indian side, while Tibet behind is a rugged

and very elevated plateau. Farther west the steep side of the Caucasus is towards Turkestan and the Oxus, and that of the Afghan ranges is towards India, while much of Afghanistan is elevated. Taking the country from the slopes of the Caucasus to Beloochistan, it may be said that parallel to the Indus there is a breadth of about 200 miles of mountain country of the steeper and more difficult character. The whole of this country is one mass of the steepest and most inaccessible mountains, intersected by very deep and low gorges, and with very scanty valleys scattered among them. It all drains towards the Indus, and the main ranges run east and west. Consequently the few difficult routes through the country also run east and west, while north and south there is scarcely any communication, the physical difficulties being almost insuperable. It may generally be said that the further we go south the less insuperable are the difficulties of this country. The most practicable passes are towards the south; and in Beloochistan the country becomes a good deal more practicable. I have said that this tract, draining towards the Indus, is about 200 miles in breadth, from east to west. We then come to the watershed, and west of the watershed is a high country which cannot well be called a plateau, for it is interrupted by ridges and much accented, but still in a rough way it may almost be described, for want of a better term, as a sort of

plateau. The heights of the different places in this country, as marked on the map, will generally be found to be within the range of 5500 ft. to 7500 ft. in altitude. A considerable portion of this tract immediately south of Ghuznee drains into an inland lake without an exit, called the Abistadeh Lake, situated about 6500 ft. above the sea. This country is in the direct line between Ghuznee and Quettah. Being at an elevation so comparatively uniform, there are no such great mountains and great depressions as in the country farther east, and, difficult though it be, there are some sort of communications through this tract; so that from Quettah or Pisheen you may go to Ghuznee without anywhere ascending or descending on a very great scale; and the main road from Cabul to Ghuznee and Candahar runs over this elevated tract. Cabul is at a height of 6400 ft., Ghuznee about 7500 ft., and Khelat-i-Ghilzye again about 5800 ft. West of Ghuznee the country drains south-west into the Helmund and Turnuk Rivers, and so into the inland sea or Lake of Zurrah, in Seistan. Towards Candahar and Seistan this country descends considerably, Candahar being about 3000 ft. above the sea, while the Zurrah Lake is apparently only about 1200 ft. Between the hills which drain to the south and the main range of the Caucasus is the valley of the Harirood, in the western part of which Herat is situated. This river runs a long way from east to west, near

and parallel to the main range of the Caucasus, much as the Cabul River on the other side runs from west to east. Further on the Harirood runs into the north-east corner of Persia, and thence loses itself in the deserts of Turkestan, passing through in fact the only gap in the Caucasian range—about the point where the Turcomans have been in the habit of entering and harrying Persia. It must be remembered, however, that a considerable range of hills intervenes between Herat and the valley of the Helmund, on the way to Candahar, while the direct route from Herat to Ghuznee and Cabul passes over almost impracticable mountains; so that there is not really a complete gap in the mountain barrier. It must also be borne in mind that there is not, as some people seem to suppose, a clear road between Herat and Merv. On the contrary, there is a high portion of the Caucasus between the Herat Valley and Turkestan.

Col. Abbott, who travelled from Herat to Merv, prudently declines, for strategical reasons, to give details of the mountain route; but as he congratulates himself much on safely getting over the pass “where many have perished in the snow,” it is evident that this crossing is high and difficult.

On the north face of these mountains the Murghab River has its sources, and that river loses itself in the desert of Turkestan, about the place which we mark in our maps as Merv. In former days, when all these countries were much more moist and

fertile than they are now, and the water was better preserved and utilized, the damming of the Murghab supplied ancient Merv and probably gave the means of a considerable cultivation. Now all these countries have been much desiccated, and the irrigation works have gone very much to ruin. There is a half-ruined Turcoman village somewhere not far from the site of ancient Merv, to which we give that famous name.

Streams from the northern face of the Indian Caucasus also supply the means of irrigation to Balkh, Khulm, and the other cultivated tracts of Afghan Turkestan—that is, the country between the mountains and the Upper Oxus; but these streams are all absorbed by irrigation before they reach the Oxus. The banks of the Oxus itself, in that part of its course, are for the most part desert and little inhabited. It is for that reason that the Oxus as the boundary between Afghanistan and Turkestan (so settled between ourselves and the Russians) is a very suitable boundary—far more suitable than are most river boundaries.

Badakshan and Wakhan farther east are hilly countries of the high Oxus, lying on the slopes of the Caucasus running down towards that river.

THE PEOPLES OF AFGHANISTAN.

Strange as it may seem, after all our experience of Afghanistan, by far the best account of the

country and the people as a whole, in fact I may say the only systematic account of Afghanistan in one view, is Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone's "Kingdom of Cabul," the result of his visit to the Afghan borders in the year 1808. There was then still a kingdom of Cabul in the sense which I have mentioned, that is a potentate with more or less authority in the valleys and accessible parts of the country, who claimed a feudal superiority over the tribes, and who, in addition to all the territories which we now reckon in Afghanistan, still possessed part of the western and all the southern portions of the Punjaub, Moultan, Cashmere, Sinde, and in some sort Beloochistan ; but he was little able to hold his own, and his dynasty was tottering to its fall.

Mr. Elphinstone fully describes the extremely limited character of the kingly authority in Afghanistan proper, and the very democratic system of the Afghan people ; see particularly chapter 2 of his second book, on "the divisions and government of the Afghan nation," and in the second volume more detailed accounts of the political system and practices of the Eusofzais, Duranees, Ghilzyes, and other leading tribes. He explains that in some of the tribes in more immediate connection with the king, the king had to some degree the privilege of selecting the principal chief from among the members of the oldest family, while in other septs or oolooses the chief

was elected directly by the people. The heads of the inferior divisions, the clans and subdivisions of clans, were, he tells us, always elected. In any case the government was of the most democratic character. The government of the ooloos and of the clan was carried on by assemblies of chiefs and headmen called Jeerghas — a popular representative body which our frontier officers very well know ; but it seems after all that the members of the Jeergha are hardly representatives, but rather delegates; for according to Elphinstone it is only in matters of small importance that the Jeergha can act without consulting their constituents. In matters of more importance he says the sentiments of the whole tribe are ascertained before anything is decided. He adds that “throughout all the tribes the clannish attachment of the Afghans, unlike that of the Scotch Highlanders, is rather to the community than to the chiefs, and though in their notion of their khan the idea of a magistrate set up for the public good is certainly mixed with that of a patriarchal and natural superior, yet the former impression will always be found to be the strongest.”

The Jeerghas are not only political but also judicial in their functions. Criminal and other trials are, as Elphinstone fully explains, conducted by judicial Jeerghas.

Elphinstone also explains the distinction, which he draws somewhat broadly, between the Eastern

and Western Afghans. The Eastern Afghans are those who inhabit the rugged country draining towards the Indus, which I have described. Most of them are agricultural rather than pastoral ; so far as the limited soil at their disposal permits, they raise crops and fruit. A great part of their subsistence is derived from the fruit of the mulberry-tree, dried and pounded. Their means of subsistence are so scant that they must live much on their neighbours, either honestly by service or dishonestly by plunder. They are, even among Afghans, more especially democratic and independent and very combative, constantly carrying on little wars amongst themselves. The Western Afghans, on the other hand, who occupy the elevated country to the west and the slopes down towards Seistan, are more pastoral in their habits, and having given reigning families to the country, have become more accustomed to some sort of kingly rule in the sense of owing fealty to a feudal king. These Western Afghans are mostly comprehended in the two large septs of the Ghilzyes who occupy the country near Ghuznee and Cabul, and the Duranees, formerly called the Abdallees, who have the country about Candahar and from thence westward.

All modern accounts make it clear that the Afghans are still just the same people as they were in Elphinstone's time, except that, having got rid of the semblance of a king of the whole country,

they are even more independent and uncontrollable in their ways than they then were. The Eastern Afghans have, as I have stated, ceased to have any connection with the ruler of Cabul, and they either govern themselves or are not governed at all.

Considering the many waves of population and conquest which have passed over the country, it is not surprising that there are few parts of Afghanistan in which the population is not more or less mixed ; but it may be said that the Afghans proper, or Pashtoo-speaking people, form the main population of the country, from the valley of the Cabul River on the north to about latitude 30° in the south, and from the plains of the Indus on the east to near Ghuznee, Kelat-i-Ghilzye, and Candahar on the west. In fact, a great deal of the central portion of this country has been held by the tribes in so independent a fashion, that it has never been explored. We know nothing of the country of the Wazeerees and some other tribes.

In the Duranee country, from Candahar westward, the population is more mixed, the dominant Duranees being a pastoral population, while the arable lands are a good deal cultivated by other races, as is indeed the case throughout a great part of the whole country west of the watershed.

It is impossible to estimate the numbers of the Afghans proper. We know nothing of a great portion of them. They are generally taken to be from a million and a half to two or three millions,

of whom one portion are British subjects in the submontane tracts; another and very large portion are independent; and another portion have generally been more or less subject to Cabul, —rather less than more.

The Afghans are physically a very fine people. There is probably no finer race in the world, and that they should be so, in spite of poverty, poor food, and the absence of washing, is a curious physiological fact. The climate no doubt is a very fine one, tending to robustness.

They have the character of being avaricious, mercenary, treacherous, and predatory. Avarice is the result of poverty combined with energy and ambition. Situated as they are, and long accustomed to serve as mercenary soldiers, it is not unnatural they should be mercenary; and so they are in an extreme degree. They can generally be bought over to anything except the surrender of the independence of their own hills; and one great cause of their weakness as a people is that every Afghan assumes as a matter of course that every other Afghan is open to an offer, so that no man trusts any other man. Treacherous, too, they are, for they have so long held the passes leading from inner Asia to India, and have been so accustomed to be bought by the many rival powers passing that way (who find it cheaper to buy them than to fight them), that it is scarcely surprising that one bargain is apt to be superseded by a

better offer. Predatory they are by nature and necessity,—plunder they will always get when they can. On the other hand, they have much pluck, industry, and enterprise. Under favourable circumstances they make excellent soldiers; they make the most of their poor hill-glens, and carefully tend the orchards which supply a great trade in preserved fruits; and as pushing and hardy small traders, who find their way into the farthest part of India, they are unrivalled.

They are almost all of the Soonnie or orthodox sect of Mahommedans; but their religion sits very lightly on them. They are more governed by their own customary laws than by the Mahomedan Code, and seem just as ready to sell their swords to an unbeliever as to any one else, even though it is to fight against believers. It is generally said that if an Afghan is employed to cut a throat, he will do so with the most entire absence of religious prejudice. They have, however, their own religious ideas, and seem to be very fond of holy shrines. The story is either true or well found which represents the people of an Afghan village, jealous of their neighbours who possessed such shrines, as having caught a holy man, killed him, and set up his shrine and worship in their village. We are far too much given to attribute religious fanaticism to all Mahommedans; indeed, in all countries such fanaticism is most frequently developed when it

also serves as a political bond; and among the Afghans especially, fanaticism is much more political than religious. Like many other matters, this is, however, very much a question of race, and there seems to be a good deal more of real religious feeling among the Eusofzyes and other north-eastern Afghans, whose blood has been a good deal mixed with the aborigines of their valleys, by descent Indians,—a more imaginative race. I think that almost all the assassinations on the frontier that have seemed to partake of a character of religious fanaticism have been perpetrated by people of these north-eastern tribes.

After the Afghans the most important people of Afghanistan are the Persian-speaking populations, who are probably almost as numerous in Afghanistan as a whole as the Afghans themselves, and are certainly much more numerous in the territories which were ruled over by the Ameer. I have used the term "Persian-speaking" because we must not confound these people with the modern Persians, of whom there are only a few in the towns and some outlying portions of the country. We may, however, fairly apply the term "Persian," in a large sense, to the great old Persian race as distinct from the Persians of modern Persia. These old Persians were a very great people, and occupied, besides modern Persia, Bactria and the neighbouring countries; in fact, not only most of what we now call Afghanistan,

but almost the whole of Turkestan. They have been conquered by Turks and Mongols, but their descendants still remain in all these countries, forming a large part of the cultivating and trading population, and everywhere retaining dialects of their own Persian language. The Persian is a charming language—charming in its simplicity as well as in other qualities : it may be called the English of the East; and none who have once had the advantage of using it seem ever to abandon it. Modern Persia is a part of old Persia which, like the rest, was conquered and overrun by Turkish tribes, who still form the dominant race in Persia. But the Persian language prevailed there—the people of Persia now speak Persian, except in parts of Western Persia, where the immigrant tribes retain their Turkish tongue. The nationality of modern Persia is in a great degree due to the adoption by these Persians of the Sheeah form of Mahommedanism, by which they are separated in bitter feud from all their neighbours. The Turkish conquerors, like the Normans in England, have become amalgamated with the Persians, and so has been formed the modern Persian people.

Outside of the limits of this modern Persia the old Persians retain their self-government in some degree only where they have had the protection of inaccessible hills. It may be said that they still occupy the whole range of the Caucasus, from the borders of Turkey to the borders of India.

I do not know if the Armenians are allied to the Persians, or whether among the variety of race and language which prevail in the Russian Caucasus any peoples of Persian origin are to be found; but the languages of the Kurds show them to be a Persian race, and in the hill country in the north of Persia we have the most Persian of modern Persians. Further east, the Eimaks and Hazarehs, tribes occupying a portion of the Caucasian range up to the vicinity of Ghuznee and Cabul, are Persian-speaking, but not pure Persians, as their features evidently show. They have strong Mongolian traits. This is said to be the result of an immigration of Tartars which took place in the time of Chengis Khan. They must have amalgamated with the aboriginal Persians, and the language of the latter prevailed. I have not learned much of the Eimaks, but they seem to be allied to the Hazarehs, and the Hazarehs are well known, not only because they were frequent at Cabul during our occupation there, but because they come down in search of work to the Punjaub territories, where they make capital labourers. A Hazareh navvy is said to be better than any native of India. In the character of labourers, at any rate, they are a useful and pleasant people.

The Kohistanees, or Highlanders of the hill country north of Cabul, are old Persians without the intermixture of blood which makes the Hazarehs a separate people; and again further

east, Badakshan and Wakhan, and it may be said the whole of the northern face of the Indian Caucasus till we reach Tibet, are inhabited by this old Persian race. Affinities of language seem to show that the interesting race of Kaffirs, or unbelievers, of the high ranges—that is, the aboriginal race never converted to Mahommedanism—are also of this ancient Persian stock. All these hill tribes retain the robustness of the original race. In a tamer condition the same race forms the mass of the cultivators of the valley of the Harirood and the neighbourhood of Herat, and also of the more southern province of Seistan. They form a large proportion of the agricultural population of the valleys about Cabul and Ghuznee; in fact, of the whole of Afghanistan except the portion bordering upon India. They also occur about Balkh and the other cultivated portions of Afghan Turkestan as well as farther north. They are always quiet and good cultivators. In Afghanistan and some parts of Turkestan, they are generally called “Tajiks,” while in the further parts of Turkestan the same people are known as “Sarts” and are frequently described under that name. They are also known under the general name of Parseewans or Persians. They are all Soonnie Mahommedans (in that respect entirely differing from their cogeners the Sheeahs of Persia) excepting only the Kaffirs, and also I may add, the Parsees of Western India. This

latter race seems to have emigrated into India rather than accept Mahommedanism. A little difference in spelling often prevents us from recognizing a word, but the words Parsee and Parsee-wan are really identical with our Persi and Persi-an. Just so we find it difficult to recognize the same word in the Turkish Spahi, the French Cypayè, and the English Sepoy, properly Sipahi.

The people of Indian race found in the northern and western borders of Afghanistan are now converted to Mahommedanism, but throughout the country Hindoo bankers and traders, still retaining their own religion, are everywhere more or less found.

In Afghan Turkestan, besides the Persian population which I have already mentioned, there is a considerable population of Uzbegs, the race of Turkish conquerors from whom the country came to be called Turkestan; but these Uzbegs seem now to be settled down as a tolerably peaceful people.

I need hardly mention the Belooches as part of the population of Afghanistan; as Beloochistan has for many years been quite independent of the Afghans; but some of our maps, include, I think, in the extreme south a little of the country bordering on the Lower Punjaub, which is really held by Belooch tribes. I may say of the Belooches generally, that it is well known to our political officers that they are in their character

materially different from the Afghans, being much less rabidly independent, if I may so express it, and more amenable to be dealt with through their chiefs.

THE DEMAND FOR RESIDENTS.

Such being the country and people of Afghanistan, let us look to our recent action. As is well known the present complications originally arose out of our demand to station British Residents in Afghanistan. We must quite realize what this means. We must always remember that nearly connected as Afghanistan is with India, the people there must necessarily view these things from an Indian point of view. It is difficult to persuade them that a Resident does not mean something of the same character as that to which the term is applied in India. Now, the British Resident in India is a very well-known character. He is by no means merely the minister or ambassador of a friendly power. He is much more than that. It is his duty to overlook and criticize the native state to which he is accredited. This near supervision and criticism is just what all native governments exceedingly dislike. They are willing enough to submit to our military superiority and political control, but it is the constant overlooking their domestic affairs that they hate; and

all of them who can by any manner of means escape from this supervision, spare no effort to do so. Not only is this the case in regard to the smaller states who have not hitherto been honoured with Residents, but I may instance the case of the large state of Cashmere. That is a state of our creation. It is by its original construction feudatory and tributary to ourselves. It has never been at all refractory or troublesome, but on the contrary has been what I may call a very amenable state. Yet the constant struggle of the Maharajah's life is to escape the infliction of a permanent Resident, in which object he has hitherto, I believe, succeeded, though he submits to a temporary Resident sent up for six months each year. For my part I think it a mistake too much to force Residents on native states. I have always found that if they are to be maintained at all, they get on best when they are left alone with a certain fear before their eyes of that sacred right of rebellion of which the people are deprived when we take the matter in hand. In my opinion, by far the best managed states in India and those most accepted by the people, are the smaller ones which have no Residents. I believe the Russians are much wiser than we in the management of the states in Asia which they have reduced to a protected condition : they have a very effective military control over them, but do not worry them with Residents.

The only case of an Indian Resident which might seem to supply some precedent for Afghanistan is in Nepaul. We have a Resident in Nepaul who is not a master but a British Minister only. We have made in some respects satisfactory enough arrangements with the Nepaul government, namely, that while that state retains its complete domestic independence, it is bound to take no Europeans into its service without our permission, to consult us in regard to any disputes with its neighbours, and especially to submit to our arbitration any disputes with one neighbour, namely, Sikhim. In Nepaul there is a comparatively settled government over a quiet people, and there are no dangerous neighbours. Yet in truth in one respect our relations with Nepaul are somewhat humiliating. The members of our Residency are strictly confined to the neighbourhood of the Residency. The Nepaulese prohibit in the strictest manner any of our officers or any Europeans whatever from travelling about, or, as they would put it, spying in any part of their country, except only the one direct road from the plains to the capital. So strictly do they adhere to this rule, that when I was last in India the officer commanding the division in which Darjeeling is situated, happening when on a visit to that place to have gone a little tour in the hills, either from carelessness or accident, overstepped the Nepaul boundary, and being in Nepaul territory was apprehended by

the Nepaul police and put in guard for the night. The next morning he was taken before the Nepaulese magistrate, when he was graciously released with a warning. The Nepaulese were acting so strictly within rule, that we could make no reclamation. I think we should hardly desire to occupy in Afghanistan a position so humiliating as that which we thus hold in Nepaul. My opinion is, that we should do much better not to demand the admission of a permanent Resident at Cabul or Candahar, if we do not proceed to a military occupation of those places. It would be quite enough for our purposes that we should have access to the territories of the Ameer when occasion requires, and, probably, that we should be permitted to station a British Agent at Balkh to look after frontier matters and settle any difficulties which may arise with the Russians. The population about Balkh is not Afghan, and there are not the same difficulties and objections to a resident Agent that there are among an Afghan population, where, even if the Afghan government consents, the people are apt to make the position a very dangerous one.

Herat too is not a very Afghan place, and, so far as the population is concerned, there would probably be no very great objection to the residence of a British Agent; but I do not see what would be the advantage of such an Agent, for we have already free access to the neighbouring Persian

territory, and that is really much more convenient for dealing with the Turcoman frontier, to which there is much easier access from Persia than from Herat. Not only is Meshed much nearer to Merv than is Herat, but the Persians hold Surakhs and other places on the immediate border of Turkestan.

I feel however that in truth this question of the Turcoman border requires to be carefully dealt with. Merv, as I have explained, is now a mere name; but the village in the vicinity which we are pleased to call Merv is really a specimen of a class of places which involve important questions with regard to the position of the Turcomans. The Russians have it appears brought under control all the settled Uzbeg Khanates. There remain only the wandering Turcoman tribes of the desert lying between Khiva and the hilly boundaries of Persia and Afghanistan, who though punished have not been brought under subjection, and who, predatory as they are, give a great deal of trouble. We may gather, however, that these people are not altogether incorrigible when they have the means of settling down to an honest livelihood. Considerable numbers of them seem to have settled to cultivation within the Persian borders, and they have considerable cultivated tracts of their own. They have it appears a line of agricultural settlements stretching along the northern face of the hills from Kezil Arvat, the present limit of the Russian military power, eastward to Merv. All along

that line of country streams coming down from the hills give the means of irrigation and cultivation which these Turcomans have utilized, and so formed a number of small settlements. The Merv district upon the larger stream, the Murghab, is a somewhat larger settlement of the kind. The last Englishman who visited Merv, Colonel James Abbot, describes it as a village of about one hundred huts, some twelve miles from the site of Old Merv. There is, he says, considerable irrigation and cultivation, but only the poorer grains are produced, and from his account it appears that far from its being a granary of Asia, as some people have supposed, grain is really brought across the desert from Khiva to Merv and thence into the barren hills lying between Merv and Herat. The Turcomans of the desert have their places of refuge and recruitment in the various oases which I have described along the foot of the hills—thither it is that the Russians may find it necessary to chase them. They have chased them, and are apparently about to chase them again into the smaller oases to the west, and some day they may have ground for chasing them into Merv. That is really the whole question of Merv, about which so much has been said. No doubt we cannot expect that the Russians should submit to allow these people to retain asylums from which they themselves are debarred. While the Turcomans still issue for purposes of plunder it seems quite necessary that

some settlement should be made, and that between the Russians, the Persians, the Afghans, and ourselves an arrangement for, if I may so express it, policing the Turcomans, and if possible settling them down, should be come to.

In another quarter, north of the Caucasus, there is also the prospect of difficulty. The last news is that the Badukshanees have wholly revolted from the suzerainty of the Afghans; which is just what might have been expected, for the Afghan dominion over them is very recent, and never was very complete. Over Wakhan, I believe, the Afghan dominion was purely nominal. In the arrangement that was made with Russia by which Badukshan and Wakhan were reserved to Afghanistan, we counted without the Badukshanees and Wakhanees. If we should try to force them back to Afghan rule it may be that we shall drive them into the arms of Russia. As things now stand, if they have really thrown off the Afghans, it may be necessary that we should establish direct communications with them through British Agents. If we acknowledge their independence, this may not be difficult, for these Persian races are much more tractable than Afghans.

As regards the question of a permanent Resident at Cabul, we must always bear in mind that the Ameer, even with the best intentions, really would have very great difficulty in securing the safety of the mission, while the internal discords among the

Afghans themselves must render the position of any Resident most difficult. In case of commotion and revolution he would find it very difficult indeed to regulate his conduct without giving mortal offence to one party or other. Suppose the variations of fortune which occurred after the death of Dost Mahommed to follow the death of Shere Ali also (and in truth we should expect them to be much more aggravated) how impossible it would be for a British Resident at the capital to hold a safe and impartial position without the support of a military force. Let us not put ourselves in so unpleasant a position.

THE SCIENTIFIC FRONTIER.

Next we come to the scientific frontier, which we are told is not the cause but the consequence of the war. I must examine that question a little in detail.

I set out my views of a safe and scientific frontier in 1849, when we annexed the Punjaub. What I then considered to be the scientific frontier was the upper course of the Indus. General Hamley, an authority very much to be respected, suggests several objections to the Indus as a frontier; but I find that his statement of the case refers entirely to the lower course of the river, where it flows through broad plains separated by a

long distance from the mountains, and where the Indian populations overpass it and are found equally on both sides. I quite admit that the Lower Indus is not a suitable frontier—but my Indus frontier is the Upper Indus, where it divides the lower hill country of the Punjaub and the range known as the Salt range from the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan. In the latitude of Peshawur and Kurram the Indus runs through this hilly country with little or no cultivation on its banks. The Afghan districts beyond the Indus which were conquered by Runjeet Singh, and to which we succeeded, namely, Peshawur, Kohat, and Bunnoo, are valleys surrounded by the Afghan hills, and their cultivation depends on the irrigation which they draw from the hill streams. The population of these districts is really almost wholly Afghan. The Indus, in fact, in this part of its course is a true ethnological boundary, the population on one side being Indian, and on the other side Afghan. Runjeet Singh had in fact held these districts but a short time, and the Sikhs had never thoroughly brought them under control. The civil government was carried on through Afghan Sirdars, and the military government was in the hands of the Italian General Avitabile, who held his own by dint of copious hanging. My proposal in 1849 was to give back these extra-Indian districts to the Afghans, establishing our own scientific military frontier upon the Upper Indus. The Indus is

there a rapid and difficult stream, forming an admirable military boundary. Confined within high banks, it is not so broad or devious as to prevent our bridging it by the aid of modern science. We might have had bridges commanded by our forts. I went, however, a little farther, and proposed a plan by which the Afghan districts which had been conquered by Runjeet were to be given back, not unconditionally, but as fiefs of the British crown, for which homage was to be done, and in consideration of which the Afghans were to be bound to our alliance, and were to be debarred from political relations with foreign powers. My idea was that by a gift on these terms, besides getting rid of an expensive encumbrance, we should not only have given an accession to the means of the ruler of Cabul which might the better enable him to maintain some sort of regular government in Afghanistan, and bind him to us by the obligation of this gift, but also we should have something upon which we could come down in case of any misconduct without the disagreeable necessity of a campaign in the Afghan hills. I also suggested that we should reserve the privilege of marching through these Afghan fiefs in order to block the passes whenever such a step might be considered necessary; and I threw out for consideration that possibly we might establish an easily-garrisoned hill fort at the mouth of the Khyber—a sort of “Porter’s Lodge,” as I

described it—where would be kept the key of the gate, and admittance given or refused as we should desire. I must admit, too, that at this time I proposed as part of the arrangement that the Ameer should receive a Resident British Minister at Cabul. It is possible that if things had been so arranged at that time, and a very substantial benefit conferred in return for what we asked, things might have settled down on that basis, and the arrangements might now have become permanent and satisfactory to both parties. But perhaps I should say that I am wiser now, and see the difficulties and disadvantages of the British Resident more clearly than I did then.

Lord Dalhousie,—that great man, who was then Governor - General,—himself told me that he approved in principle of my suggestions, and would have preferred the Indus boundary to that which was adopted, if other considerations had not interfered; but he said that the Afghans had come down and given some assistance to the Sikhs during the war, and that this precluded him from making such a concession as I suggested. I have always had the greatest respect for and admiration of Lord Dalhousie, and I have been his follower in most things; but I must say I think that in this matter he too much sacrificed permanent to passing considerations. After thinking over the matter for thirty years more, I am, I confess, of the same opinion still, and believe that the Indus

would have been the best boundary. I not only admired Lord Dalhousie's great genius, but thought him entirely right in the annexations which he made within India, the Punjaub, the Nagpore country, and the rest—(Oude be it remembered he did not annex: he declined that because he thought we could not justly do it). If, however, that great man had a weakness, it was perhaps in a disposition to carry annexation too far, and I ventured to think him wrong when he overstepped the natural and ethnographical boundaries of India in going beyond the Indus on one side and into Burmah on the other. It is somewhat curious that now, thirty years later, both those extra-Indian annexations have brought us into trouble. It may be that if we had never crossed the Indus in 1849 we should not now be involved in a new Afghan war; and whatever the immediate advantages of the Burmese annexation, if we had not gone beyond India to the Irawady, we should not now be troubled with the question which looms before us in Burmah.

However, as a matter of fact, in 1849 we carried our frontier up to the foot of the Afghan hills, and for the last thirty years we have encountered there the difficulties which I and others anticipated. With our strong and equal hand we have no doubt managed directly to administer the annexed districts as Runjeet Singh never did, but we have have had great trouble with them. For instance,

I am told that the Punjaub criminal returns show more murders than the rest of India, and the one district of Peshawur more murders than all the rest of the Punjaub. The difficulty of bringing the perpetrators to justice is extreme, for I am told that in point of audacious, unblushing, and well-supported perjury a Bengalee is a mere child to an Afghan. These difficulties, however, are trifling compared to those caused by the raids of the hill tribes upon our borders. These raids always have been from the beginning of time, and I am afraid always will be. We have had the most extreme difficulty in devising sufficient means of dealing with the tribes upon our borders. We have tried blocking them out from all traffic with our territory, but that has been only partially successful, and every now and again we are obliged to undertake expeditions into the outer hills. From the time of Sir Charles Napier and Sir Colin Campbell down to the present, these expeditions have always been of the same character, with the same results, or rather *no* results. We always, with much fuss, arrange expeditions, each of which is to be the really effective and exemplary one, which is to settle the question finally. We always go up into the hills and generally encounter but little resistance in going. When we get into the petty settlements within our reach the hill people disappear with their flocks and herds and goods, and leave us their miserable

huts, upon which we wreak our vengeance, as we do upon any petty crops they may have left, if it is the crop season. When that is done, nothing remains but to go back again. As soon as we turn, the hill tribes are down upon our rear; and thus having marched up the hill, we march down again in a somewhat humiliating way, howled at and fired upon by the Afghans as we go; so with more or less loss we get home again and write a despatch, describing the whole affair as a most successful expedition, crowned by a glorious victory. That has been many times repeated. It must be admitted that this state of things is not very satisfactory, and in spite of our so-called victories the evil has not been cured. But upon the whole the raids and the expeditions are of late years somewhat less numerous than they were before. Some of the hill people we have induced to settle in the lower districts, upon land we have given them. And at any rate we know the worst—we have become accustomed to the situation. There is a limit to the exposed border; and after all it may be said, that these troublesome tribes are rather thorns in our side than a serious political danger. One thing is quite certain, that for offensive action against us, the Afghan tribes are wholly contemptible. No two tribes ever seem to be capable of uniting against us for offence, and if ever they did unite, they would still be entirely contemptible enemies down in the plains. There

a single division would very easily dispose of them.

That was the position till the other day. Now let us see the new position that has been taken up. On the first day of the present session of Parliament, Lord Beaconsfield in the Lords and Sir Stafford Northcote in the Commons made a simultaneous and almost identical announcement, to the effect that the objects of the present war had been already accomplished by the occupation of the points which our troops had reached, and Lord Beaconsfield went on to say that this accomplishment of the object of the war consisted in the occupation of the three main routes between India and Afghanistan, which he said he hoped we should permanently retain. In saying this he referred to the occupation of what are known as the Khyber, Kurram, and Bolan routes. Now as a matter of fact, the Kurram is certainly not one of the three main routes between India and Afghanistan, for the plain reason that by this route Cabul and the upper country are only reached over a succession of difficult passes, the highest of which is 12,000 feet high,—say twice the height of the Simplon. It is quite clear that such a mountain pass is not one which can ever admit of an easy and abundant traffic, or of the passage of troops encumbered with baggage and wheeled carriages. This route has never been and cannot be used to any considerable extent for mercantile purposes.

It is in no sense one of the main routes. There are really three main routes, but the principal route lying intermediate between the Khyber and the Bolan is not the Kurram, but a route much further south known as the Gomul or Goleree. We have very little knowledge of this route, and have never surveyed it, but it must be a comparatively easy way to the high tract between Ghuznee and Quettah, for it seems that it is really more used by traders than any other route ; the private traffic that way is I gather larger than by either the Khyber or the Bolan.

I leave the question of the Bolan for the present. Here I desire to examine the effect of our occupation of the Khyber and Kurram routes—especially of the Kurram. The result of that arrangement is that we have projected our occupation along narrow valleys far into the hills, and have taken possession in each case of long strips of country which may be described as all length and no breadth. The result evidently is and must be a great multiplication of our old difficulties; for whereas we have hitherto had comparatively short lines of frontier along the foot of the hills, we have now, by running very far up into the hills at several points, made that frontier several times longer than it was before. The result has been, and must continue to be, that we have had many more collisions with many more tribes than ever we had before; for we come into contact with a

great many tribes whom we had not before touched. The accounts which we almost daily receive sufficiently evidence that this is the state of things. Every two or three days the telegraph brings us an account of a fight with this tribe or with that. The general result seems to be that 200 or 300 of the natives are killed to two or three on our side. Sometimes our loss is more considerable. Correspondents have been brought under military control, and we are not permitted to know the truth of these things; but from such accounts as we have I am rather inclined to fear that some of the actions in which the losses on the two sides are so utterly disproportionate, are little more than attacks by our troops on villagers who have not at once made submission. Other affairs have been more serious. For instance, I believe there is no doubt that the expeditions we undertook against the Affreedees of the Khyber, whom we attempted to punish in the Bazaar and Teerah hill valleys, really were a failure; ending in our retreat for strategical and political reasons. It is well understood, too, that a good deal of such success as we have had with the tribes has been achieved as much by bribing as by fighting. The many small fights which are grandiloquently described in the telegrams may be exhilarating to our troops, but they are by no means so to the Afghans. On the contrary, they must inevitably lead to a very great bitterness and deep hatred.

The most notable instance of the impolicy of this petty style of warfare is General Roberts's expedition into the Khost Valley. In former days, in connection with operations on the other extremity of India, I have had the pleasure of knowing and appreciating General Roberts's military qualities. He was then in a subordinate position, and no one man could have been better ; but I must say it now seems that, having risen somewhat suddenly to high military and political command, he appears to have been left too unbridled, and not only to have carried his military action improvidently far, but to have dabbled too much in politics to which he was not bred. The Valley of Khost is far away in the hills, altogether apart from our former frontier, and also quite off the line of the Kurram route to Cabul. The inhabitants of that valley had given us no cause of offence whatever when General Roberts undertook their subjugation. The descriptions of the correspondent of the *Standard* probably were highly coloured, but in the main I cannot see that they have been at all contradicted. General Roberts's telegrams did in fact confirm the main portion of the correspondent's statements. There seems no doubt whatever that General Roberts did carry fire and sword into that comparatively peaceful and happy valley—if such a term can be applied to any Afghan valley ; that he did burn, destroy, and plunder a number of villages and

killed many of the inhabitants. I had assumed that the justification of these proceedings would have been that the Afghans had committed atrocities according to the military code which we choose to set up; that is to say, that not being able to meet us in open stand-up fight according to the fashion which suits us best, they had carried on a guerilla warfare, and cut off our stragglers, &c., according to the fashion which suits them best, but which we do not recognize. Somewhat to my surprise, I find from General Roberts's dispatch that this is not so. In that despatch he does not allege any atrocities on the part of the Afghans as a reason for the severe punishment which he had avowed that he meted out to them; their original offence was that "it was very evident that the arrival of the British forces was not a welcome event to the inhabitants of the country." On the contrary, they collected in the villages and allowed the neighbouring hill tribes to collect there in a way that was deemed to imply an inclination to resist the forcible annexation of the country. It was upon that ground that the British troops attacked them, and treated them with such extraordinary severity. I must say I cannot see what justification we can have for carrying on war in a manner so contrary to civilized usages in a district where we were acting simply with the desire to annex new territory. After all, it turned out that General Roberts in going into Khost had attempted

what was beyond his means, and he was obliged to retreat in a somewhat ignominious way. The result certainly must be to leave memories of bitter hatred among the people of Khost without our having accomplished any object whatever.

Not only did we thus come into collision with tribes in the very heart of Afghanistan with whom we had no previous quarrel, but the result was to stir up all the hornets about, and as an immediate consequence of this expedition the great tribe of the Waziris made a serious and successful raid into our own territories on the other side of the hills.

The whole Kurram movement was, I think, a mistake. We have scattered our forces imprudently. We should have done much better to concentrate them on the Khyber and the Bolan, both of which are far more practicable routes. Of the Khyber this at least may be said, that it is the only route practicable for guns and carriages, and that it is that which has always been followed. It does not involve the surmounting of passes at a great elevation, but only the ascent to Cabul through passes difficult but not impracticable. Of the Bolan I shall speak presently. Here I will only add, that about Candahar also it has seemed to be a strange policy to allow of advances to Gharisk and other places, involving disagreeable collisions with the people followed by retreat. That can only irritate and embolden the tribes. We should have been in a better position if we had

halted quietly at Candahar, unless we had resolved to advance to Cabul. I suspect the Afghans may with some truth suppose that we have a sort of superstitious dread of Cabul.

Taking a purely military view of the occupation of the occupation of the three routes through the hills, it is not for me to attempt to determine the matter by arguments of my own. On this subject I appeal to the authority of General Hamley and other scientific military authorities, who have, I think, very clearly shown the extreme strategical objections to the plan of occupying separately all three routes, if we are not to do more than that. Besides the constant exposure to attacks on either side of a very long line of occupation on each route, what they specially dwell upon as fatal to the plan is the entire want of lateral communication between the forces occupying the different lines. The Khyber route is separated from the Kurram route by the Sufeid Koh range, the height of which is so great and so uniform that there are absolutely no passes through or over it whatever. It appears to maintain throughout its length a pretty uniform altitude of about 15,000 ft., so that the force stationed along the Khyber route is absolutely cut off from that on the Kurram. The Kurram route communicates with Cabul, and the upper country only over the Shutergerden pass, 12,000 ft. high, blocked by snow great part of the year, and at its best only practicable for very light

traffic. It is literally the fact that General Roberts's force cannot communicate with that of Sir Samuel Brown's by any other means than either by going back through Kohat and Peshawur and up the Khyber again, or else over the Shutergerden and back to the Khyber through Cabul. On the other side we cannot tell the height of the mountains and the character of the passes between the Kurram and the Gomul or Goleree route, simply because that is an inaccessible country, to this day wholly unexplored, and regarding which we are almost entirely without information. It may certainly be assumed that it does not admit of easy military communications. That being so, it is scarcely surprising that no responsible military men have been found to advocate this plan of occupying the three routes, so far as I have been able to learn. The only man of authority who did, I believe, some years ago when he was a younger man and had not his present experience advocate the occupation of the Kurram Valley, was General Peter Lumsden, the present Adjutant-General in India ; but I am told that in his late letters he expresses an opinion decidedly adverse to the positions which we have taken up. Lord Napier of Magdala's opinion seems to be decided on the point. He was long in favour of holding on to our Indian frontier. Now his opinion has advanced, and he argues that we must place our frontier beyond the tribes whose hostility gives so much

trouble, and says, "it is for the interest of the empire that when the day for the struggle comes we should fight our battles beyond the mountain barrier. I think it necessary for the interests of our Indian Empire that we should advance beyond the mountain barrier and fight the battle of India outside and not inside of it." This view, then, is that if we advance at all we must take up positions, not merely within the mountain passes but beyond them.

In addition to the strategical disadvantages of the plan for holding these different routes through the mountains, another great objection is the unhealthiness of the hot and narrow valleys. Peshawur has always been a most unhealthy place, which has created great havoc among our troops, and already we have begun to experience the same difficulty in the more advanced posts. This, too, seems to be a strong reason why we should either not advance at all, or advance further into the higher and healthier country.

Certainly this plan for occupying the three routes is not dictated by military science.

Well, then, if this new frontier which we have now occupied is not scientific from a military point of view, is it a scientific frontier from a political point of view? On this subject I am able to quote a very high authority, no less than the real author of the plan of the scientific frontier. Dr. Bellew has accompanied several missions into Afghanistan,

has probably seen more of these hills than any other man, and so far as his knowledge goes there certainly could be no better authority. It is generally understood, I may say known, that he is the only man whom Lord Lytton has very fully admitted into his confidence in this matter. It seems that some years ago Dr. Bellew had published his opinions on the subject of the frontier, and now, after the advantage he has had of full communication with Lord Lytton, and with a complete knowledge of what is going on, he has republished his views in the form of a little pamphlet which has been sent to me from India. Reading that pamphlet I have found to my surprise that the idea of "rectifying" the frontier in order to obtain "a scientific frontier" which we had attributed to Lord Beaconsfield, is really plagiarized from Dr. Bellew, whose letters, published years ago, are entirely devoted to urging this plan—the terms "scientific frontier" and "rectification" being those which he continually repeats. Let us see, then, what Dr. Bellew's plans are. First, I may quote him as showing with much greater authority than I can the objections to a mere occupation of the routes through the hills according to the present plan. He says :—

"The Kurram Valley would involve the addition of about 150 miles of hill frontage to our border, and would bring us into contact with the independent Orakzais, Zaimukhts, Toris, Cabul-Khel,

Waziris and others, against whose hostility and inroads, here as in other parts of the border, we shall have to protect our territory. By its possession, as we are now situated, we should be committed to the defence of a long narrow strip of land, a perfect *cul de sac* in the hills, hemmed in by a number of turbulent robber tribes, who are under no control and acknowledge no authority. In ordinary times its acquisition would add to the serious difficulties of our position. In times of trouble or disturbance on the border its possession would prove a positive source of weakness, a dead weight upon our free action. In it we should run the risk of being hemmed in by our foes in the overhanging hills around, of being cut off from our communications with the garrison at Kohat, by the Orakzais on the one side, by the Waziris on the other. These are the disadvantages of the step. In return what advantages should we derive? Not one. With Kurram in our possession, we certainly could not flank either the Khyber or the Goleri pass, because between it and the one intervenes the impassable snowy range of Sufed Koh, and between it and the other intervenes the vast routeless hilly tract of the Waziris. From Kurram we could neither command Cabul nor Ghazni, because the route to either is by a several days' march, over stupendous hills and tortuous defiles, in comparison with which the historical Khyber and Bolan passes, or even the less widely known

Goleri pass are as King's highways. These are the main objections to the adoption of the scheme with our border as it now stands. But let the border be rectified, let the frontier line be reconstructed, and all these objections and disadvantages disappear."

Well, he says that everything is to be put right by rectifying the frontier, and he proceeds to tell us what that means. He says:—

"But what does the rectification of the border mean? What does the reconstruction of the frontier imply? By reconstruction of the frontier is implied the subjection of the border tribes, and the embodiment of schemes for their employment. We must now no longer pursue the course we have hitherto followed. We must now change our policy entirely; we must now alter our tactics altogether. Instead of, as heretofore, settling our border quarrels by expeditions against the offending tribes, we must now, and for the future, take advantage of them to settle our border line. We must, in future, wage war with each offending tribe. We must annex their hills, disarm the people, and reduce the clans to subjection. We must tell them that they are bad neighbours, not fit to be free; that we have tried them for twenty years, and found them habitually abusing their independence; that they are no longer tolerable as neighbours; and that we now come to take their country under our rule, and to reduce them to

subjection. On their subjection, a suitable garrison permanently located in the hills, the people disarmed, a proportion employed as militia and police, &c., &c., form elements in the settlement of the country, and the reconstruction of the frontier. We shall convert a set of lawless hill robbers into prosperous subjects and valuable soldiers. We shall supply all our frontier deficiencies and get rid of all our frontier troubles."

This, at least, is intelligible enough. Dr. Bellw's plan is not merely to hold the passes, but wholly to conquer and occupy the country of the hill tribes and thoroughly to keep them down. My only objection to the plan is that he does not in the least attempt to show how this is to be done. He says "Do it," and stops there. Evidently what he proposes is much easier said than done. It would no doubt be very desirable if it could be done, but we should have a good many very hard nuts to crack before we could do what he proposes. I have heard Afghanistan compared to our Scotch Highlands. I have heard it said, "You put down those troublesome Highlanders and turned their hills into delightful recreation and shooting grounds—why should not you put down the Afghan tribes in the same way?" Well, the objections are that Afghanistan is many times larger than the Highlands of Scotland, that the mountains are many times higher, that the people are far less amenable to authority, that we are

many times more distant from our resources, that the resources and revenues of India are not in the same proportion as the resources and revenues of England, and that you can hardly carry the Afghans across the seas to colonize a new country as you did with the Highlanders, when you substituted sheep for men, and grouse for sheep, and deer for grouse. I confess I am not bold enough to recommend any such attempt in Afghanistan.

On the contrary, I am not for attacking the independent hill tribes at all. It seems to me that in the House of Commons the strong common-sense of Mr. Burt, the Member for Morpeth, brought him very much to the point when he said, that professing as we did to enter into the war only to coerce the Ameer of Cabul, we really have expended most of our energies in fighting the independent peoples of Afghanistan. There can be no doubt of this, that if we attempt a conquest of the tribes in order to obtain a scientific frontier, we must enter on a war which can hardly be said to have yet begun. As I have already remarked, our present positions have been won as much by bribery as by fighting, So long as we do not do more than we have yet done, the tribes which have not specially suffered do not seem to take our proceedings very much to heart; in fact, they have something of the same feeling towards us which hunters may be supposed to have in regard to an invasion of rich fur-bearing animals—they may do

some damage at first, but it is hoped that they will leave their skins behind them in the end. A facetious Special Correspondent, the other day, telegraphed that there was a panic in Afghanistan upon the rumour that we were about to retreat. That, no doubt, was a pleasantry; but it is certainly the case that if we were to attempt to master the interior hills, the war would assume an entirely different character from anything that it has yet had, and the independent tribes would certainly fight very much better than they have yet fought.

I assume, then, that the conquest of the tribes will not be attempted; and if without that thorough measure the occupation of such positions as General Roberts has taken is attended with such difficulties as Dr. Bellew has so vividly painted, we must look elsewhere for the scientific frontier. I am much convinced that if we advance at all we cannot again arrive at a scientific frontier till we reach the high country which I have described, lying further west. There, no doubt, it might be possible to establish a new frontier, beyond and commanding the hills and valleys of the eastern tribes, and situated in a country which would admit of lateral communications between one part and another.

So long as we occupy just enough to irritate without isolating and controlling the tribes, it must almost necessarily be that besides continually

harassing us, they will intrigue with Cabul, while Cabul will intrigue with Russia, and our latter state will be worse than our first. We shall thus be in continual hot water till we are obliged in self-defence, and under pressure of circumstances, to make a farther advance. I shall say something more of the advanced frontier when I come to the "last resort."

POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS.

Now comes the question, "It is very easy to object to everything, but what would you do?" I am very clear as to what I would have done a little time ago, and that is—*nothing*. Now that we are involved in the present complications, it is much more difficult to say what should be done, but I will try the best I can.

I have hitherto said nothing of the Bolan pass, and I will now go to that part of the question. In fact, the Bolan is situated very differently from the other routes. The Sulimanee mountains, the habitat of the Eastern Afghans, and the southern extremity of which is held by Belooch tribes, seem to come to a sudden end to the south, at a point between the 28th and 29th parallels of latitude. There seems to be there a sort of retrocession of the mountains. The high outer range disappears, and the plain country takes a long stretch to the

west. The Bolan pass, instead of running like the others for a couple of hundred miles through the great outer barrier of mountains, 12,000 ft. to 16,000 ft. high, consists of a much shorter ascent from the plains of Cutch-Gundava to the high quasi-plateau country. The route from Shikarpore, near the Indus, to Dadar, at the foot of the Bolan pass, though easy enough in winter (the difficulty of obtaining carriage apart), is said to be very hot and unhealthy in summer, and to be very much flooded during the high Indus. But that part of the route would easily be surmounted by a not very expensive railway, which is certainly quite necessary if we are to make a permanent advance in that direction. From Dadar upwards the first part of the route seems to be very gradual, and apparently there is only some thirty or forty miles of considerable ascent to Quettah, which is above the pass, at the height of 5500 ft. The country through which the hilly part of this route passes is a Belooch country very sparsely inhabited; and though not free from predatory habits, the Belooches are much more tractable and easy to manage than the Afghans. In fact, we have already both by treaty and by occupation complete access to the Belooch country, and there would not be difficulty on that score. At Quettah we are in our right; in occupying it we have done that which we have full treaty right to do. That, at any rate, is a great advantage. Whatever objections

I have hitherto entertained to any advance into countries beyond the natural limits of India, I have always reserved the question of Quettah; and I am free to confess that now that we have gone so far, I think that either Quettah or some better cantonment in that part of the country should be permanently occupied in strength and connected with India by thoroughly efficient means of communication. Just look at the map and it will be seen how extraordinarily commanding a position this about Quettah is. The border line of the Afghan hills, which from Peshawur to the southern extremity of the Punjaub runs nearly north and south, has here so far retroceded, that Dadar, on the edge of the plains, is considerably to the west of Cabul and Ghuznee, while Quettah and the neighbouring valley of Pisheen are a long way west of those places. Quettah is infinitely nearer to Candahar than are Ghuznee and Cabul. The Khoja Amran range, which lies on the way to Candahar, is about 7500 ft. above the sea, that is nearly 2000 ft. higher than Quettah. No doubt we should hold command of the routes up to that point, and from thence we should be in a position easily to descend at any time to the valleys about Candahar. I cannot see then that there would be any object in going down to Candahar for the purpose of permanently occupying that place. We have a more direct route to Ghuznee and Cabul over the high level country without any great ascent or descent,

There is this great political objection also to the occupation of Candahar, that by doing so we should cut in half the only Afghan country in which any settled government is possible, and thus make such a government impossible.

I quite accept then that it would be desirable to select for an advanced post the best and healthiest site to be found in the neighbourhood of Quettah or Pisheen, 5000 ft. or 6000 ft. high, in a country suitable for the European soldier; and to establish there a considerable cantonment of European and other troops in immediate communication with India, who would thus be able both to guard the passes and to come down whenever they are wanted for Indian purposes, leaving only a garrisoned fort. The railway would be made as far into the pass as possible, and a thorough good road for the short remainder of the distance.

On the other side, to the north, since in 1849 I committed myself to the idea of a "Porter's Lodge" in the Khyber, I will not go back from that now, if the military and political authorities think it practicable. No doubt we have long been in a great dilemma at Peshawur on account both of the unhealthiness and of the very long-debated question whether we are to establish a great fortification there. If we can get rid of the sanitary and military difficulty by establishing a more tenable post at some higher spot in the Khyber hills commanding the pass, possibly it may be a good

arrangement. Further than that I cannot venture an opinion, for I have no intimate acquaintance with the Khyber tribes.

I would certainly abandon the Kurram country altogether. It seems to me that the occupation of that route is emphatically what I have before described as putting your hand into a hornet's nest and keeping it there. This Kurram route takes us into the very heart and centre of the independent country. Established there, we shall continually set the whole nest of hornets in motion outside and inside; we shall continually come into collision with them throughout our whole line of occupation; and continually they will retaliate upon us, on their outer borders towards the Punjaub, as they have already done. By all means let us avoid all positions which bring us into collision with these tribes, where it is possible to avoid it.

Assuming, then, that we hold the Bolan and Quettah, and the mouth of the Khyber, abandon all other positions, and carefully abstain from farther irritation of the tribes, I would then say that if we can find any Afghan government capable of coming to terms with us and controlling the country, we might accept the position and make with that government the terms necessary to our security—viz., that while the Afghans should have full domestic independence, and should not be worried with permanent Residents at their headquarters, they should guarantee us free communi-

cation when necessary, and access' to Balkh and the Turkestan frontier; should engage not to employ Europeans without our permission; and should undertake not to negotiate with any foreign power except through us. If any capable government would make such terms and keep the peace, that would be a very good result; but my difficulty is, that I do not believe that any such government is now possible. I have already shown why I think that, without the command of money and large foreign territory, no permanent government of Afghanistan as a whole is possible. Even if the personal ascendancy of some strong man should be established for a time, by a kind of accident, it cannot last. It may be, though I think it probably will not be, that Yakoob or some one else might establish some sort of authority in the open country about Cabul, Ghuznee, and Candahar; but that he should control even those tribes which have hitherto acknowledged some sort of feudal authority, I think very improbable: and then how about Badukshan and the other outlying territories which have already thrown off the Afghan yoke? So far as we can gather from the recent accounts, there seems to have been a complete revolution in Badukshan, which has wholly got rid of all Afghan authority, and set up for itself. The Balkh country, too, seems to be in a state of anarchy; and Abdoor Rahman, the son of Shere Ali's elder brother and

predecessor for a time, is preparing to invade that country from the side of Turkestan. Any ruler of Cabul who seeks to regain Badukshan and the rest, must reconquer these territories—a very improbable event under present circumstances. However, we are already apparently in the position to put this question to the test, so that I need not seek to argue it at length. All I can say is, that if such a government as I have described can be found, by all means let us avail ourselves of it.

On the other hand, if we do not find such a government, or it does not succeed in maintaining itself without our aid, what I would seek to press in the strongest terms which I can command is, for God's sake don't attempt to establish such a government by means of our influence and support. That would be the most fatal mistake of all. Our experience of the government of Shah Soojah sufficiently shows that. No one, I should say, can read the history of those days without being convinced that we should have been infinitely more likely to hold the main positions in the Cabul country if we had done so ourselves without the intermediary of that unmanageable puppet the king, whom we set up, and whose mismanagement went very far to cause all the evil. We could have dealt with the tribes ourselves infinitely better than through him. Do not let us make this mistake again in dealing with Yakoob or any one else. If any such person can establish himself

without our aid, let him do so; but establish him not by our aid, for if that is done the hand of every man in Afghanistan will be against him. This is the real difficulty in any negotiations with Yakoob. No doubt poor Yakoob, in the unpleasant position he holds, will readily enough agree to terms with us; but how is he to carry them out? If ever a man was, he is between the devil and the deep sea. If he makes terms with us, he has all Afghanistan against him; if he does not, we are prepared to overturn him. It is on that account that I am very distrustful indeed of any arrangements which it may now be possible to make by negotiations with Yakoob or any one else who may take his place.

The last telegrams from India seem to indicate that the Government have resolved to give up Candahar and Jellalabad, and so to cut short the occupation of two of the routes in a way which I think very prudent, if the upper country is not to be occupied; but there remains the Kurram country, which General Roberts (no doubt acting under Lord Lytton's instructions) took upon himself to annex without any authority from Her Majesty's Government, as we have been distinctly told. It surely would be very weak indeed to maintain our hold of most embarrassing positions in order to support an act thus done without authority. The whole question now hinges upon that. So long as we insist on holding the Kurram

route, no amicable settlement with the tribes is possible, and any pretended settlement will only lead to fresh complications.

Yakoob is said to have accepted our terms ; and many people jump to the conclusion that, this done, everything is settled. On the contrary, that is the beginning of difficulties. It remains for Yakoob to assert his own position—to go back to Cabul and say, “I have surrendered part of our territory ; I have accepted the demand for Residents ; I have yielded everything. Now obey me ; and having obeyed me, help me to recover the possessions of my father which have revolted from me, to defeat Abdoor Rahman and all other rivals, and to establish a stable government.” I hardly expect to see such things effected. However, we shall soon see ; and if that fails, then our more serious difficulties will commence.

THE LAST RESORT.

Failing any arrangement of the kind which I have just mentioned, I would again say that in my opinion the difficulties and expenses of an occupation of Afghanistan are so great that, rather than undertake a more extensive occupation, I would leave the country to its fate, holding only Quettah and the mouth of the Khyber, and, trusting to the chapter of accidents. I would risk the difficulties which would now no doubt attend this course rather

than face the greater difficulties which an extended occupation must necessarily involve. But if this may not be—if Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to retire to the line of the real Indian frontier—then in my view, far preferable to the half-and-half plan of holding the several routes through the most difficult and troublesome parts of the country, would be the bolder, more thorough, and more scientific measure of going beyond the mountains and taking up a position on the high land stretching from Cabul through Ghuznee to Quettah. That is what I understand to be establishing a position beyond the mountain barrier, as recommended by Lord Napier of Magdala and others. Ghuznee, the culminating and commanding point of this tract, is the old historical centre from which the country has been commanded, so far as any previous dynasty has really commanded it. From the high line, of which Ghuznee is the centre, no doubt a strong force would command the passes from Central Asia on the one side, and in some degree dominate and isolate the independent Afghan tribes on the other side.

If we thus isolate, as it were, the country of the independent tribes, then I think there is no reason whatever why we should seek to deprive them their independence, and of those democratic institutions which are their birthright. On the contrary, I would encourage them to develop those indigenous self-governing institutions, democratic though they

be, which form the ancient law of the Afghan race. Under the shadow of our external military protection I would foster those institutions and would seek to establish an Afghan Republic or congeries of Republics. It has always seemed strange to me that we, who so much pride ourselves on our popular institutions, appear to be the last to recognize anything of the kind among other peoples. We seem always in the habit of supposing that all over the world the absolute power of despotic rule is the natural state of things, though nothing can be more contrary to the facts. Our conduct in India, in Turkey, and in Egypt, seems to have been throughout guided by that belief; and in Afghanistan, which is, as I have said, one of the most democratic countries in the world, the greatest danger seems to be in the idea that if we can only find or establish a king and come to terms with him, all will be settled. One would have thought, as I have already said, that our experience of 1841 might have cured us of that delusion. So far then as regards all the country east of Ghuznee, the course which I would follow is to isolate it and make it self-governing and independent. I would hold the Bolan and Khyber routes, but not the Kurram. The Goleree route we might hope to keep open for mercantile purposes only. On the other hand, as regards all the remainder of the country really Afghan, that is the districts about Candahar and thence westward,

consisting principally of the Duranee country, my view would be that as these western tribes have been more accustomed to some sort of kingly rule, and the family of Dost Mahomed are now really the chiefs of the Duranees, I would give every facility to Yakoob, or any other member of the family who may be more acceptable to the people, to establish himself as reigning chief of the Duranees, with the possession of Candahar and all the Duranee districts and dependencies. Herat is hardly properly included in these terms, but that part of the valley of the Harirood seems properly to belong to no other tribe or nationality, and exposed as it is to depredations by the hill men, it could hardly be independent ; so I would seek to make that also a dependency of the Duranee chief of Candahar. With that chief I would make the terms I have before suggested—domestic independence, but political dependence upon us.

At Cabul we should come into close contact with the Kohistanees and Hazarehs of the hill country to the north and west, and might make separate arrangements directly with them ; as likewise with the people of Badukshan and the neighbouring principalities, who are, as I have explained, of the same Persian race as the Kohistanees. I would give to these countries the form of government which the people are found to like best. Possibly some of them might even prefer our rule if fairly

administered with due consideration to their wants and wishes. Both the Kohistanees and Hazarehs have, I think, the reputation of being troublesome and difficult to manage in their own hills, but all this very much depends upon ethnological considerations, and we never can tell how far a people are amenable to quiet rule till they have been fairly tried with it. I may take as an instance of this the example of Oude. Because that country had been filled with baronial mud-forts and given up to extreme lawlessness, the belief was entertained that the population of Oude was very warlike. It was under the influence of that belief that, Lord Clyde being excessively anxious to finish the mutiny campaign, terms were given to the Talookars with arms still in their hands, but really trembling for their lives, which were very humiliating to us, and a great political blunder. This action was the result of an ethnological mistake. Those of us who knew the people knew that they were the same as their cogeners of the districts of Oude which we annexed at the beginning of the century, and they have in fact proved as quiet as any sheep. So it might not improbably be that the Kohistanees and Hazarehs who occupy the great Caucasian range, which is after all the real barrier against invasion from Central Asia, might prove amenable enough. I cannot suppose that such good honest labourers as the Hazarehs are not amenable to fair manage-

ment at home ; and the old Persian race are everywhere a quiet good people whom it is not very difficult to control. They give no trouble to their rulers either in Afghanistan or in Turkestan, and probably might be brought to reasonable self-government, in Kohistan and Badukshan, if they are protected and encouraged.

I have little doubt then that if we must advance on Cabul and Ghuznee, and can find the finances necessary for the maintenance of our position there, we should really command the great Caucasian barrier towards the north without encountering those insuperable difficulties which seem to attend the occupation of any properly Afghan country.

In the event of such an occupation of the strategical positions in Afghanistan as I have contemplated in the last resort, I think we should proclaim that to all those who can in any way successfully govern themselves, we shall give self-government in the form which is most acceptable to each people, and that we shall ask them for no revenue or tribute, and shall not interfere in their domestic affairs, unless it be to arbitrate between them either at their request or where internal disorders render such interference absolutely necessary. On the other hand, we may in some sort bribe them into acquiescence, while utilizing them for our own purposes, by offering to many of them military and other service under ourselves.

That is a consideration which would go very far to reconcile them to accept our political superiority and the protection against external aggression which we should afford them.

I really do seriously hope that under our protection something like successful republican institutions might be maintained. I know that to many who think that free institutions are only for ourselves and not for others, the idea of an Afghan republic will seem somewhat ridiculous; but I would only ask such unbelievers to read Elphinstone's account of the institutions of these people, and satisfy themselves whether, notwithstanding the anarchy and disturbance which have prevailed, democratic institutions do not underlie the whole framework of Afghan society. Things have been so much disturbed that we cannot expect that these people should at once become peaceful, but we might well hope that things would gradually be regulated, and that with self-government the position might be very greatly improved.

Although most of my own early service was passed on what was then the north-west frontier of India, I have never been personally responsible for the management of the tribes on the Afghan border; but when in later years I had to deal with peoples on the other extremity of India, upon the frontiers of Eastern Bengal and Assam, my experience has been that it is quite possible to tame

and regulate tribes which have hitherto been quite unregulated. These Eastern tribes of which I speak are, no doubt in many respects, very different from the Afghans, but many of them are nearly as robust. Like the Afghans of the inner hills, they had never been conquered by the Hindoos or the Mahomedans or any other rulers of India; and in recent days they have raided on our territory and disturbed us quite as much as the Afghan tribes. My experience is that when peoples of this kind are isolated and cut off from the savage countries behind them, it is far best to take them in hand and bring them to regular and peaceful government. Some of these tribes were found to have very democratic institutions which we have very successfully encouraged and developed. I may particularly notice the Cossyas, in the hill country south of Assam. They are a people whose laws of marriage and descent, &c. are of the most archaic description, and who derive what little civilization they have from China and not from the west; but they are now quietly governing themselves under their indigenous democratic institutions, with all the machinery of elections and the rest. We are only troubled by that product of modern civilization, bribery and corruption at elections. The Cossya country is now just as quiet and accessible as the county of Surrey, except that some people have a prejudice against the ordinary

mode of travelling—namely, being carried in a creel upon a woman's back.

I hardly hope that the Afghans would settle down as readily. No doubt they would less readily brook our interference; but gradually a settlement might be effected, and I should not despair that as they gain confidence and belief in our desire to let them govern themselves for their own benefit, their country might become accessible to us like any other country.

The great difficulty of such a plan as I have proposed is of course the expense. That no doubt would be very considerable. And we should practically derive no revenue from the country, for any little that we might collect from the few districts directly occupied by ourselves would be expended on the local administration. For myself I see no objection on principle to making India pay for undertakings which are connected with India and are in some sort intended for the benefit of India. The mother country pays more than her share of the expenses of the empire : we do what we can for India, and India might fairly enough pay her share if she only had the money ; but then, as a matter of fact, she has not the money. Her people are undoubtedly very poor. The more I see of other countries, the more I realize the poverty of India and the cruelty of taxing the people more than we can help. The position of

Indian finance is unfortunately such that there is no hope of a surplus, and I do not see that we can fairly raise more taxes in return for the old-fashioned style of government. If it be possible still to raise some further rates or taxes, I think that these should only be obtained, as has lately been done, as a means of paying for additional benefits evident to the people, the money being, in fact, expended by themselves. If Afghanistan were occupied in the way I have mentioned, some considerable saving might be effected in the military expenses in India itself, Afghanistan being henceforth the frontier fortification by which India is shielded and the troops there held ready to send to India, in case of an emergency. The money thus saved in India would be a fair contribution towards the expense of Afghanistan; but no more than this could be derived from India, and any further expenses England would have to pay.

But after all, this is a rich country, not very heavily taxed; and if we would really have a spirited foreign policy, great foreign dominions, and a strong military position, I believe that the occupation of Afghanistan would be an important step towards that object. I speak of the permanent position of this country apart from the present depression; for after all, despite the depression of our industries, we still have capital—money is cheap—the yield of the income-tax does not fail. We still are, and may hope to

remain, the money-lenders of the world. We can bear well enough another penny in the pound upon property if we would have the great position I have mentioned.

It is better, too, that we should honestly realize the fact that whether from the inherent difficulties of our position, or whether from not fully and properly carrying out the system adopted, our present military arrangements are a failure; or, at any rate, even if we have made a successful commencement of the plan of increasing our reserves at home, they are a failure as regards foreign service. The difficulty of supplying a great army in India under the short-service system has never been fairly faced; and on the occurrence of the late African emergency there has been made painfully manifest our entire failure to keep even a few battalions in an efficient state as the next on the roster for foreign service. On the other hand, since the mutiny we have been afraid to employ too many Indian soldiers. We really have not a great native army in India as compared to the country, and the greater part of what we have is not really efficient for severe or foreign service. So it is that having one war on our hands in India, we have been obliged to send heavy dragoons and imperfect regiments of English boys to Africa instead of the light Indian regiments, which, with a nucleus of Europeans, would have been far better fitted for the service. Afghanistan would

certainly offer us several varieties of excellent soldiers, divided by race and language from the Indian soldiers, and also very much divided one from another. We might enlist not only Afghans, but also Kohistanees, Hazarehs, Kaffirs, Beloochees, and even perhaps some Uzbegs—all different nationalities. We might thus carry much further than hitherto the *divide ad impera* policy. We might hold India with the aid of Asiatic non-Indian soldiers. We might station in Afghanistan, in a good climate, a large portion of our European army, assisted by Indian soldiers and perhaps by a native militia. Our resources being in India, regiments stationed in Afghanistan could come down when wanted very lightly equipped; and whereas, at present we really have in India available for foreign service only a very few picked regiments, we might greatly multiply that number from the new populations of the Afghan territories and borders. We might thus make large numbers of good soldiers available for service abroad and lessen the drain upon our own population. That I believe to be really a very great object, if we would combine great foreign possessions and a great position abroad with industry at home. We shall certainly feel the want of men very much indeed if there should be any revival of our manufacturing prosperity. I really believe that we might make a good deal of the plan which I put forward as that of last resort, if we are

willing to pay for it. But pay for it we must. Dost Mahommed used to say that his country produced only two things in abundance—men and stones: the rest we must supply.

SUMMARY.

To sum up. My view is very decidedly that we cannot without great complication and disturbance hold our present position in Afghanistan; that we really must either go back or go forward. I am convinced that to entangle ourselves in the most difficult part of the hills, and to hold a succession of routes through those hills without holding the high lands above, is quite the worst policy of all. Especially I think that the occupation of Kurram Khost and the so-called route that way to Cabul, in the very heart and centre of the real Afghanistan of the Afghans, and surrounded by the most troublesome of the independent tribes, would be the greatest possible mistake. Let us choose then one of two alternative plans—an Indian or an Afghan frontier. In the one case we must concentrate our forces and call off General Roberts. We must not irritate, but conciliate the tribes; and if we are not to surround and isolate them, the best solution is to leave them alone as much as possible, and not push ourselves among them. In that case, still holding Quettah, let us try again, if we will, the possibility of an Afghan state such as that of

the late Shere Ali, claiming to ourselves only access to Balkh and the other terms which I have mentioned. Failing that arrangement—and I greatly fear that it must fail,—then for my part I would leave Afghanistan alone, and see what may come. If that may not be, then I come to the plan which I have described as “The Last Resort,” that is, do not try to conquer the independent tribes, but isolate them, and protect them in the exercise of their indigenous institutions. Give up the played-out kingdom of Cabul, and boldly take up a central and commanding position on the high ground about Ghuznee and Cabul, communicating with India by the Bolan and Khyber routes. Let us then put ourselves in direct communication with the more amenable peoples beyond our positions, control them, secure our frontier, and add new races of soldiers to our army. If this must be done, it is probably better that it should be done soon than later.

Such a policy would no doubt be a fine, I may say—a magnificent game. Holding India in a stronger and more dignified way, if our possession of part of Burmah should some day involve a further advance in that direction, we should have the necessary troops. If events are really tending to force upon us a great African empire, we might draw from our Asiatic possessions the troops best fitted for such an undertaking. And if we must hold a great position in the Mediterranean, we

might have a better chance of doing so than when, last year, we sent a single division of native troops there. Such a policy would involve the abandonment of half measures—it would be intelligible enough, and might be tempting enough—but it must be an expensive and risky policy. I only throw it out as the alternative to be considered in the very last resort. I am myself all for economy, peace, and quiet at home, and would only seek to hold India so long as we can do so without being forced into ambitious projects beyond the Indian borders. That was my view in 1849, and that is my view in 1879.

ENGLAND'S POLICY IN THE EAST :

OUR

RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

AND

THE FUTURE OF SYRIA.

BY EDWARD CAZALET.

SECOND EDITION.

London :

EDWARD STANFORD, 55, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

1879.

P R E F A C E

IN publishing this Address to the Electors of Tunbridge Wells in the form of a pamphlet, I have been influenced by two considerations. The first is, that, although the subject matter is thrown into the shape of an address, it forms a sequel to two pamphlets in which I have already treated of the Eastern question.* The second reason is, that the address discusses mainly two subjects of paramount importance at the present time—our relations with Russia, and our Protectorate over Syria and Asia Minor. Is it necessary or desirable that our relations with Russia should be those of chronic distrust? or, are there in the present political situation circumstances favourable to our arriving at an understanding with that country? Is there a possibility, so far as England is concerned, of coming to a permanent and satisfactory settlement of the Eastern question? These are the questions which I have endeavoured to answer. I have sought to do so by showing that the accession of political strength and of com-

* "The Eastern Question." London: EDWARD STANFORD, 55, Charing Cross, S.W.

"The Berlin Congress and the Anglo-Turkish Convention." London: EDWARD STANFORD, 55, Charing Cross, S.W.

mercial activity which would accrue to us from uniting the Mediterranean with the Persian Gulf by a line of railway, would place us in so strong a position of vantage that we could deal in a liberal spirit with the interests of Russia. Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Syria, and Mesopotamia would then complete our chain of communication with India, by the shortest route which it is possible for us to retain under our own control.

The reader will find in these pages an attempt to solve the difficulties which meet us in Syria. The information on which I have relied I believe to be trustworthy, and I venture to submit that the scheme proposed is, at any rate, a practicable one.

E. C.

FAIRLAWN, TONBRIDGE,

25th November, 1879.

ENGLAND'S POLICY IN THE EAST.

An Electoral Address.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,— Introductory.

I should not have ventured to come forward as a candidate for your suffrages at the next general election, if I had not received on several occasions, both here and elsewhere, encouragement from the leading members of the Liberal party of this constituency. The kind way in which this important meeting has received me on this my first public appearance in such a capacity, gives me grounds to hope that, in upholding to the best of my ability the cause of the Liberal party here, I am doing so with the approval of the great majority of the citizens of Tunbridge Wells. As you are aware, it is not as a stranger to you that I come forward to ask your suffrages. My home is amongst those whom I seek to represent. I have been asked if I would stand for some other constituencies ; but my answer in each case was, that I would stand for Mid-Kent or not at all. I have spent a good many years of my life in Russia, but I always contemplated settling down in this part of the country, where various members of my family have resided ;

Introductory. and I trust therefore, that you will not think that you are dealing with an outsider, but with one who has some claims to be considered a Kentish man. Perhaps, also, you will not consider it a disadvantage that a long residence in Russia has enabled me to know something of the people of that country and of its government. At a time when our political relations with that empire are every day assuming greater importance, you may not consider it undesirable that one who has had an opportunity of intercourse with the Russian people should be heard on matters in which both England and Russia are deeply interested. I hope to have an opportunity before long of addressing the constituency on the subject of the Depression of Trade and its causes ; and, also, on the present position of Agriculture ; but this evening my remarks will deal especially with the policy of England in the East.

I do not share the opinions of those who look upon the incidents connected with the Eastern Question, as old stories. One act more in the Eastern drama has been played—that is true ; but the story has not yet been fully told. Its issues are still hidden in the future, and in those issues, whether we wish it or no, England will have to play the most important part.

Russia.

Now, gentlemen, in dealing with the Eastern Question, the first thing I would say is, that we must not allow ourselves to be led away by preconceived notions. Within the last ten years, the

whole condition of Europe has been profoundly ^{Russia.} modified; and a policy which in former times might be justifiable, may be now completely out of place. If it is our desire to promote peace and harmony throughout the world, then, our relations with Russia should engage our first consideration. We cannot hope for that security which is necessary for a general and permanent revival of commerce, so long as we are unable to come to a friendly understanding with Russia. A scientific frontier will not help us half so much as an honest attempt to deal in a friendly spirit with Russia, about the great questions that have divided us. Let me endeavour to explain to you to what extent the position of Russia has been modified by the results of the last war. It is true that she has regained Bessarabia, and has acquired Batoum and Ardahan and Kars, as a set-off for the sacrifice of 200,000 of her soldiers, and at least 150 millions of pounds sterling; but, on the other hand, she is further off than ever from Constantinople, and her influence in the East has suffered greatly. This you will find to be true for the following reasons. The different nationalities of Servia, Roumania, Bulgaria, and Montenegro, have now been set free from Turkish bondage, and Russia has no further excuse for interfering in their behalf. They would, now, be as jealous of Russian interference as they, formerly, were impatient of Turkish misgovernment. By the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria has

Russia.

become the chief power in the Balkan Peninsula ; and the duty of protecting these young nationalities from Turkish aggression has henceforward, by European consent, devolved upon Austria. If, therefore, Russia were again to cross the Danube, it could no longer be with the object of protecting oppressed nationalities, but as a conqueror bent on annexing territory. But the Danube is a German river, and neither Austria nor Germany could ever submit to allow the mouths of the Danube to fall into the hands of Russia. If, therefore, she again attempted to march upon Constantinople, she would find herself opposed, not by an effete empire like Turkey, but by the Christian population of the Balkan Peninsula, backed up by all the power of Austria and Germany. We may take it for granted that Russia has no desire to attempt such an impossible task, and henceforth her chief concern must be to prevent these young nationalities whom she has enfranchised from falling into the hands of Austria. In this, you will see, her interests are now identical with those of England.

Austria.

And now let us consider the position of Austria and Germany. By the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria has shifted her centre of gravity towards the East. Instead of being essentially a dual empire, she has become what may be called a tripartite empire, composed of Germans, Hungarians, and Slavs ; and, for the first time in her history, the Slavs preponderate in numbers.

This may suit Germany very well, but it cannot Austria, please Russia, and henceforward Austrian and Russian interests clash in the Balkan Peninsula. Austria, therefore, stands in need of all the support which Germany can give her. This, then, is the position of Russia and Austria: Russia cut off from Constantinople, Austria advancing towards it.

But Germany has, also, her own difficulties to Germany, contend with. In an evil hour for her, she wrested Alsace and Lorraine from France. These French provinces have been a thorn in her side ever since, necessitating increased armaments. Increased armaments mean increased taxation, and the German people are becoming impatient of increased taxation. Germany has suffered even more than England from the depression of trade, and the national liberal party, who have hitherto been the main supporters of Prince Bismarck, are not disposed to vote for increased taxation. But there is a considerable deficit in the Prussian budget, and Prince Bismarck must have money to carry out his policy. So the customs' dues are to be raised. Now you must not imagine that Prince Bismarck is either a Protectionist or a Free-trader: he is a great statesman, and, moreover, as the Germans have experienced, a perfect dragoon. He understands as little, and, it would seem, cares as little, about trade and commerce, as probably Lord Salisbury or Lord Beaconsfield. He is somewhat in the

Germany.

position of the man who must have money, and who has made up his mind to get it, honestly if he can, out to get money. To increase direct taxation would set the whole country against him; so the Liberal party, his natural supporters, have been thrown overboard, and the landed proprietors and manufacturers have been won over by a protective tariff, and the clerical party by timely concessions. Had these manœuvres been confined to Germany, we might have passed them over with little comment, as one of the melancholy phases which a nation struggling for unity may have to pass through. But it is now proposed to absorb Austria into a Protectionist league with Germany. Thus placed, the question becomes one of European importance. The influence of Austria already extends to the *Ægean* Sea, for Austria is to construct the railway from Novi Bazar to Salonica, and this protectionist league would consequently cut Europe in half, raising for trade and commerce a Chinese wall straight away from the shores of the Baltic to the Mediterranean and *Ægean* Seas—shutting out Russia completely from free intercourse with the West, and the Western nations from intercourse with the East. All the trade between Germany and the East which under other circumstances would have passed through Italy, will through this Treaty be diverted to Trieste and the *Ægean* Sea. This Treaty, if it be carried out, as seems probable, can scarcely fail to be the

Austro-
German
Protectionist
League.

precursor of calamities to Europe. It is a gauntlet thrown down to France and Italy; and a note of defiance to Russia. Admitting that it does not affect us directly, since our communications by sea with all these different countries remain unmolested, it must nevertheless inspire us with anxiety both for the general trade of Europe, and for the future independence of the nationalities of the Balkan. We should be glad to see these young nationalities working out their independence and forming a federal alliance, as Germany, Switzerland, and America have done. Yet this, gentlemen, is the Treaty which an English Foreign Secretary has described as "good tidings of great joy." I venture to say that, when the people of England have more fully realized the meaning of this Austro-German Alliance, they will not applaud the words which fell from Lord Salisbury, or endorse the policy which these words foreshadow.

Gentlemen, whether her Majesty's Government is alive to the identity of English and Russian interests in the Balkan Peninsula, I am unable to say; nor do I believe any man in the country is able to give you this information. Lord Salisbury has spoken, and the little he has said is anything but reassuring. Lord Beaconsfield has also spoken. His utterances are like those of the Delphic oracle, unintelligible to ordinary mortals; but, if anything is to be gleaned from them, the peace of Europe is dependent upon England

Austro-German
Protectionist
League.

England with-
out a declared
Policy.

England without a declared Policy.

doing something, and we are left in the dark as to what that something is. This also is not reassuring, and no intelligible information is given to us upon a subject which interests the country so deeply. The people of England may wake up any morning, and find that they are committed to a line of policy which may involve them in war, it may be with Russia or it may be with Turkey. The practice of springing a mine upon the nation is one which the present Government has carried to an unrivalled pitch. It is this kind of permanent political unrest which is so antagonistic to the interests of commerce, and so distasteful to a hardworking people.

Turkey in Asia.

Let us now cross the Bosphorus into Asiatic Turkey. Here we enter a country quite as badly governed as European Turkey, and, moreover, a country which we have taken under our immediate protectorate. A great deal has been said about the reforms in Asia Minor which were to be carried out under our guidance, but which have remained, and are probably likely to remain for a long time to come, a dead letter. The fact is that in this region we have a different problem placed before us. In Asia Minor four-fifths of the inhabitants are Mahomedan, and it is clear that to interfere between Mahomedan rulers and their Mahomedan subjects is a totally different matter from interfering between Mahomedan rulers and Christian subjects. It is like interfering between a man and his wife—a kind of interference that sensible men

avoid as much as possible. Our engagements oblige us to protect the country from aggression on the part of Russia. Besides, there are Armenians and Greeks who inhabit parts of the country, and it is our duty to see that the lives and property of these people are protected; but we are not called upon to interfere in the internal government of Asia Minor, unless we are expressly asked to do so, by its rulers and by its inhabitants. We have attempted this kind of interference in Egypt, and our experiences there are not such as to make us very anxious to repeat the experiment in Asia Minor. Let me bring under your notice very briefly, the recent policy of our Government in Egypt. The chief difficulty which we have to contend with in that country may be easily appreciated if we ask ourselves the question—From whom do the English and French Commissioners sent there derive their authority? If they derive it from their respective Governments, and if they can override the wishes of the Khedive, then France and England necessarily become responsible for the government of Egypt, and for the payment of its debts. It is a notorious fact that the late Commissioners exercised considerable authority there, simply because the late Khedive did not know what would happen if he discharged them; but no sooner did Sir Stafford Northcote state publicly in the House of Commons that the Khedive had power to dismiss them, than an excuse was very soon trumped up and they were

Turkey in
Asia.

Egypt.

Egypt.

sent about their business. It is true that the Khedive was soon afterwards deposed for his peremptory action in the matter ; but it seems difficult to justify the action of our Government in obtaining his deposition from the Sultan, for doing that which Sir Stafford Northcote had publicly stated he was justified in doing. The appointment of a new Khedive and new Commissioners does not modify these conditions, and it will be no easy matter to steer clear of fresh complications. Another difficulty evidently arises from the fact that the objects which France is pursuing, are not precisely similar to those which England is seeking after. The consequence is, that when France and England disagree, the Khedive becomes completely master of the situation. This difficulty might in a great measure be obviated, by admitting a third Power to assist in the organization of the country. England has no desire to rule in Egypt ; all that we can want is, that the country should not go to rack and ruin from bad government and mismanagement. The addition of a third Power would give to our interference more of an international character, and render any misunderstanding between France and England less dangerous, for the third power would then act as arbitrator. Italy is keenly desirous of taking part with England and France, and of sending a Commissioner to Egypt. Indeed, the Italian people consider that they have been very cavalierly treated by France and

Italy and the
Egyptian
Question.

England, because the overtures of their Government in this matter were rejected. Italy is, next to France, the chief power in the Mediterranean. She possesses a seaboard there which is much larger than that of France; and, although she has no possessions in Africa, it is natural that she should desire to make her influence felt on the south side of the Mediterranean. The excuse that if Italy were admitted, Germany and Austria and Russia would also claim to take part in the administration of Egypt does not seem valid, because Germany and Russia are not Mediterranean Powers, and Austria has her hands fully occupied in Turkey. Besides, if Russia and Germany were anxious that England should alone take charge of Egypt, they cannot consistently complain if England associates France and Italy with herself in the management of the affairs of that country. It is my belief that instead of rejecting these advances on the part of Italy, as our Government has done, it would be good policy to encourage them.

Italy and the
Egyptian
Question.

Let us now advert to Afghanistan. Recent events in that country have caused much anxiety in England. There is, however, no part of Lord Salisbury's speech at Manchester which, to my mind, is so little open to criticism as that in which he justifies the action of our Government in respect of Afghanistan. Without going into the the circumstances which led to this unfortunate war, I may say that the one point which stands out

Afghanistan.

Afghanistan. prominent is, that in consequence of our hostile attitude to Russia in Europe, Russia considered herself justified in sending a mission to Cabul. This fact completely modified our relations with the Ameer, and to my mind necessitated the energetic action which has followed. The phantom of a scientific frontier has now vanished, and it has become necessary for us to take over the government of the country. I do not look upon this result as an unmitigated evil ; for I believe that neither our rule in India nor the condition of the Affghans will suffer from this change. In saying this, I am aware that I am laying myself open to the criticisms of those who hold, that no one can look with satisfaction on the prospect of the nearer approach of the frontiers of two countries whose governments are so diametrically opposed as those of Russia and England. If it is true that English interests are really in jeopardy from our coming into contact with Russia, then is England in an unfortunate position indeed. For, if any future event can be predicted with certainty, it is that our frontiers in India must before long become conterminous with those of Russia ; and if this does not happen by our going to meet Russia, it will happen by Russia coming to meet us. There are some who imagine that a time may come when England may be compelled to relax her hold upon India. The question is not now a practical one for us ; but if that time should come, it will be because England will have then

Russia in Central Asia.

fulfilled her mission in the East, and because the different populations under her guidance will have been sufficiently educated to know how to live at peace with each other, and to govern themselves. But I venture to say that the time will never come, when England will have to surrender her dominion in the East to any foreign conqueror. I may add that nothing strikes me with more astonishment than the extreme anxiety and misgiving which Russia seems to inspire in the minds of many Englishmen. My firm belief is that Russia has neither the will, nor the power, seriously to endanger our dominion in the East. Her basis of operations, if she wish to attack us, would be thousands of miles away. Her possessions in Central Asia are not a source of revenue, but of permanent outlay to her. She has China to threaten her on the East, and Asia Minor, with a hostile Mahomedan population under an English protectorate, on the West. If we add to this, that her subjects in Central Asia are by no means friendly to her, and that she stands in need of all her resources in Europe to make head against Austrian and German influence, I think you will readily come to the conclusion that to make an enemy of England in Asia would be the most suicidal policy which her statesmen could pursue. It is the interest of Russia and of England to come to a friendly understanding with regard to our respective boundaries in Asia. What the line of frontier should be, is a matter of detail which

Russia in
Central Asia.

Russia in
Central Asia.

I have not sufficient knowledge to discuss. All I will say is, that if we are permanently to occupy a portion of Affghanistan, the less we are compelled to annex the better. I will add that a friendly understanding is indispensable for both countries; and we can well afford to be liberal towards Russia, because we have no desire to extend our boundaries beyond what is absolutely necessary for the protection of our frontier. But it is possible for Russia to compete with us in a totally different way from that of opposing us with arms. The *Golos*, an influential Russian paper, in a leading article written a few weeks ago, says:—"The objects which Russia must strive to attain in Asia are twofold: first, the civilization of the semi-barbarous tribes which she has conquered; secondly, the development of commercial relations with them. These regions must be made accessible by railways, and by diverting the River Oxus into the Caspian Sea, thus connecting them with the water system of Central Russia. This undertaking should be (for Russia) a national one. The construction of these routes will be a most fatal and conclusive blow to England on the part of Russia. No railroads through Asia Minor to the Euphrates and the Gulf of Persia will be in a position to compete with our water route, leading from the Baltic Sea to the frontiers of Affghanistan, and the whole of Northern India must involuntarily and passively fall under the influence of Russia."

This kind of competition, gentlemen, is perfectly legitimate, and if Russia is in a position to vie with England in the arts of peace, then is she welcome, so far as my feelings go, to all the prosperity she may derive from it. Unquestionably the opening up of these barbarous countries to the civilizing influences of trade and commerce, is one of the chief duties which devolve upon Russia as well as upon England in Asia, and Russia, as well as England, may derive legitimate advantages from this source ; but I think that the writer in the *Golos* is reckoning too fast in assuming that anything in this way that Russia can do will have the effect of bringing the whole of Northern India under her influence.

Russia in
Central Asia.

This leads me to the last division of my address, in which I shall endeavour to discuss our acquisition of Cyprus ; our communications with India by the Euphrates Valley ; and the importance of Syria in the permanent settlement of the Eastern Question.

The acquisition of Cyprus, which was heralded in by the Government with such rejoicing, is absolutely held in derision by a considerable section of the public ; and there are those who assert that it ought to be given back to Turkey, or handed over to Greece. Unquestionably the island of Cyprus, taken by itself, would be of no advantage to us. As a source of revenue, it can avail us nothing. Even as a means of protection to the Suez Canal, it is a delusion. But if Cyprus

Cyprus.

Cyprus, and
the Euphrates
Valley Rail-
way.

Euphrates
Valley Rail-
way.

is the first step in a great policy ; if it is to form an outpost in connection with a new road to India and the East ; if it is to be a basis to enable us to carry out the obligations we have incurred by assuming a protectorate over Asia Minor and Syria, then it may prove the foundation-stone upon which the peace and prosperity of the East may be built up. I am aware that the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railway is looked upon by some as an impracticable scheme ; but—to quote the evidence of only one man out of the many practical men who are in favour of it—what does Mr. Cameron, the great African explorer, who has lately travelled over the country, say on this subject ? In a recent article* he states that the whole length of the line from Tripoli, passing by Aleppo, Orfa, and Baghdad, to Bushire, in Persia, would be 1,200 miles ; its construction would not cost more than £10,000 per mile, or in all, £12,000,000, and, adding £2,000,000 for harbours at each end, the total cost would be £14,000,000. By this route Karachi, which is now in connection with the Indian Railway system, might be reached in 200 hours, less than nine days, from England ; whereas, by the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, it will take seventeen days to reach Bombay. The distance would consequently be reduced for letters and passengers by one-half. Mr. Cameron is of opinion that, with a reasonable subsidy for

* September number of *Macmillan's Magazine*, pp. 414-423.

carrying mails, the line would very soon become a paying concern. But I will not trouble you with further details on the subject. The insuperable objection that our Government could never take part in the construction of a railway in a foreign country, no longer exists now that we have a British protectorate over Syria and Asia Minor; and if the work can be shown to be desirable and necessary, nobody doubts that it can be accomplished.

Euphrates
Valley Rail-
way.

These considerations lead up to the important ^{Syria.} issue, namely, the present condition of Syria. What, then, is the actual condition of Syria? Syria has a population of little short of two millions. Of this population, nearly 1,300,000 are Moslems. But these are not Turks; they are Arabs, and they hate the Turks with an undying hatred. The Christians number about 450,000, consisting chiefly of Catholics and Greeks. Of other sects, such as the Druses and Ansairiyeh, there may, perhaps, be 150,000; and there are 35,000 Jews. "The Turks," I am quoting from good authority, "are few in number, strangers in "race and language, hated by every sect and "class, wanting in physical power, destitute of "moral principle, and yet they are the despots of "the land. The Arabs have a proverb that, " 'though a Turk should compass the whole "circle of the sciences, he would still remain a " 'barbarian.' Those occupying the higher Government positions in Syria are Turks almost to

Syria.

“ a man. They obtain their power by bribery,
 “ and they exercise it for extortion and oppres-
 “ sion. Every pasha, in coming to the country,
 “ knows that his term of office must be short,
 “ and, therefore, his gains must be large. . . .
 “ One thing will not fail to strike the observant
 “ Englishman in Syria—patriotism is unknown.
 “ There is not a man in the country, whether
 “ Turk or Arab, Mahomedan or Christian, who
 “ would give a para to save the empire from ruin.”
 We are further told that there is only one road in
 the whole country, and that in winter the streets
 of the great cities and villages are almost im-
 passable. “ One would imagine, in traversing
 “ Syria,” says the writer of this account, “ that
 “ the whole country had recently been shaken to
 “ its centre by an earthquake. . . . It is em-
 “ phatically a land of ruins, and ruins are
 “ increasing in number every year.”* Such I
 believe to be a truthful account of Syria at the
 present day. And what country do you imagine
 is responsible for this sad condition of Syria?
 You will say Turkey. But England, gentlemen,
 has a great share in this responsibility. It was
 through the armed intervention of England, that,
 in the year 1841, Syria was transferred from
 Egyptian to Turkish rule. At that time Lord
 Palmerston was in office ; and his policy, as he
 explained to the French ambassador, M. de Bour-
 going, was to turn Syria into a desert under

England's
 responsibility
 in connection
 with Syria.

* See Murray's Handbook for Syria and Palestine, 1875, p. 24.

Turkish rule, and interpose this desert between the Sultan and his Egyptian vassal. In confirmation of this, which may seem to some an astounding statement, I can only refer you to "Guizot's Memoirs," vol. 2, p. 525. Well; gentlemen, to Syria assuredly reparation is due on the part of England. Fortunately for us, Syria is now under our Protectorate, and we have it in our power to make this reparation. Shall we, or shall we not do so? This ought to be for Englishmen one of the most engrossing questions of our foreign policy. To attempt to improve the Turkish Government of Syria is, for obvious reasons, a hopeless task. To attempt to govern it in conjunction with other powers, as we have done in the case of Egypt, is also out of the question. No other country has anything like the same interest in Syria, that we have; besides which, it is to the English nation alone that the population of Syria look for protection and support.

England's
responsibility
in connection
with Syria.

There are, then, only two courses open to us. One is to abandon the country altogether; to restore Cyprus to Turkey, and, in the words of the late Lord John Russell, to let the country take its chance. The other course is, to fulfil the obligations to Syria which we have incurred.

Consider, first, what would be the consequences of our giving up our protectorate over Syria and Asia Minor. The result would infallibly be to throw the whole country into the arms of Russia.

The meaning
of our Protec-
torate.

The meaning
of our Protec-
torate.

Without the support of England in Asia, the Turks would have to accept the protection of Russia; and an offensive and defensive alliance between Russia and Turkey would be the inevitable consequence. Such an alliance would be prejudicial to the interests of the whole civilized world. Russian influence would at once extend to the Bosphorus, and the Black Sea be converted into a Russian lake. The improvement of our communications with India by the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railway would become an impossibility, and the regeneration of Syria would be postponed for an indefinite period. Such a result would be nothing short of a national disgrace to England. The alternative, gentlemen, is that we should recognize our responsibilities and fulfil our obligations to this unhappy land.

What ought
to be done for
Syria.

Under these circumstances, what ought to be done for Syria becomes a question of national importance, and it is to this question that I ask you to give me your attention for a few minutes longer. The Arabs, who form two-thirds of the whole of the population of Syria, and are for the most part lords of the soil, are with very few exceptions completely illiterate, regardless of truth, dishonest in their dealings, and immoral in their conduct. In large towns, the greater proportion of the upper classes are both physically and mentally feeble, owing to the effects of polygamy, early marriages, and degrading vices. Out of such elements there is no possibility of creating a

ruling class. The other sects are too few in number, and too bigoted and superstitious, to be of any assistance in the government of the country. If, then, the regeneration of Syria is to be attempted, it must of necessity come from without, and can only be brought about by an influx of an industrious and more enlightened people. Fortunately this last resource is not denied to us. The restoration of the Jews to their own land, seems to me the only practicable means by which the regeneration of Syria can be effected. You must not imagine that this event, important though it unquestionably must be, need cause any great perturbation in Europe, or prove in any way a strain upon the resources of England. All that is required, is that England should create the conditions under which a large number of Jews would gradually migrate of their own accord to Syria and Palestine. The first condition of such a movement is that law and order should be introduced under our Protectorate. Here we have no Turkish population to deal with as in Asia Minor and Egypt, but a people who claim our protection and are anxious for our rule. It is indispensable that the greedy pasha and the unjust judge should be got rid of. If England means to introduce reforms, it cannot be by half measures: she must take the government of the country into her own hands. Our Protectorate has been recognized by Russia, and no country has protested against it. Any opposition on the part

The regeneration of Syria to be effected by a new population.

How to
attract a new
population.

of Turkey must be overcome. It was England who handed over this country to the Turks in 1841. Turkey has ever since abused her charge, and it is only just that she should now be called upon to transfer it into more capable hands. Turkey will require our assistance in many ways. She derives very little revenue from Syria, and this might be secured to her. A second condition essential to the return of the Jews is that some great work, such as the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railway, should be undertaken in the country by our Government. This would afford occupation for a vast number of mechanics and labourers, and serve as a guarantee that our protectorate would not be abandoned.

The interest
of the Jews
in Syria and
Palestine.

But there is another influence which would greatly assist the colonization of the country. It has long been a cherished project with the Jews to establish a college in the Holy Land, which would serve as a centre of Jewish philosophy and science. Such an institution would readily meet with support, and incalculably quicken the pulses of their national life. With an extensive literature in their own language, in which every branch of philosophy and science is represented, the Jews would be able to make such an institution a genuine centre of intellectual activity. The leading learned men of the Jewish race would be naturally attracted to such a national centre, and would form a nucleus round which all the intellect of the nation would gather, by means of which

the necessary elements for the future government of the country might be formed. I understand that the most suitable site for this college has already been generally agreed upon.

The colonization of Syria by the Jews.

I have still to show you that these attractions would be sufficient to induce numbers of Jewish families to migrate to Syria. The total number of Jews throughout the world is variously estimated at from eight to ten millions. Of these the greater number—probably six millions—inhabit Russia and the old Polish provinces which now belong to Austria, Germany, and Roumania. The condition of the Jews in Russia is deplorable in the extreme. They are denied civil rights. They are forbidden to hold landed property. They are treated as aliens, and are restricted to limited areas in which they suffer from the evils of overpopulation. These conditions have induced no fewer than 250,000 Jews to emigrate to America within the last thirty or forty years, and it may be confidently predicted that Syria under our protectorate would offer still greater attractions. The land of Palestine alone, is capable of supporting ten times its present population. It may seem strange to say of the Jews who are scattered throughout the world, that they still consider this to be their fatherland. But, if they are denied the actual possession of it, they still bear it in their hearts. Three times a day every Jew offers up a prayer for the restoration of his race to the land, and the temple, from which it has been

The dissatisfaction of the Jews with their present condition in Eastern Europe.

The Jews still
a distinct
nation

exiled for eighteen centuries. It is a remarkable fact that this scattered and down-trodden people possess within themselves all the elements which go to form a united nation. They have a code of laws for their own government; they have a literature, a history, a language, and a religion, which are peculiar to them. Their education is, with some exceptions, on a par with that of the most civilized nations. Numbers of them excel in all the different branches of mechanics and art; and in trade and finance they are, as we all know, unrivalled. Though last, not least, they are a people who would fight bravely in the defence of their country. During the last twenty years of the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, the military conscription fell heavily upon the Jews. In proportion to their numbers, for every Russian that was enlisted, five Jews were compelled to enter the service; and during the late Turkish war they bore themselves bravely in the face of the enemy. *No one who has any knowledge of the Jewish character can for a moment doubt that if the Jews were restored to their country under an English protectorate they would prove true to our nation, and that Syria would become as firmly united to England as if it were peopled by our own countrymen.*

A Liberal
Foreign
Policy.

Gentlemen, I trust I have succeeded in making it clear to you that a friendly understanding with Russia is the foreign policy I should like to support. I am aware that between an arbitrary and a free government an important element of sym-

pathy is wanting ; but the Russian nation, I state this with confidence, has always been desirous of cultivating friendly relations with England ; and those who, like myself, have lived long in Russia, and have the real interests of that great country at heart, cannot abandon the hope that the Emperor, whose name will be handed down to posterity as the emancipator of the serfs, will crown his great work by emancipating his people from arbitrary rule. But, be this as it may, our own interests, and the interests of the Russian people, demand that we should come to an understanding. Such an understanding does not by any means involve our mixing ourselves up with the internal affairs of Russia. A frank understanding would avert danger on the only side from which it can come upon us, and leave us free to restore our finances, and turn our attention to other matters. I have further advocated the regeneration of Syria, and have given you what, by some, may possibly be called Utopian ideas as to the mode in which it may be brought about. But, at any rate, they are ideas which have been anxiously thought out, and they are based upon trustworthy information. One thing, in any case, is certain, if the regeneration of Syria can be effected, it will prove of lasting benefit to England and to the world. England has been suffering from an almost unparalleled depression in trade. Our Premier tells us that improvement is coming from the East and from the West, that

A Liberal
Foreign
Policy.

chemicals have risen, and that the "magic of patience" is causing silver to advance. This gleam of sunshine may extend to the East, but it comes to us unquestionably from the West; and I venture to think that it is dangerous to trust to the "magic of patience," because then we should become those "waiters upon the inevitable" whom Lord Salisbury has told us that he has no confidence in. I would say, however, that from whatever source these blessings come, our own Government has certainly done little to promote their arrival. There are two ways in which a Government may assist in the development of commercial prosperity. The one is by adopting a straightforward, unselfish policy, in harmony with the general interests of the world, thereby promoting peace. The other is by assisting to open up undeveloped countries to the civilizing influences of trade and commerce. It is rare that such an opportunity as now presents itself of promoting these interests, has fallen to the lot of any nation. Syria is the connecting link between three continents. Through Syria in ancient times the greater portion of the traffic between Asia and Europe passed, and through it and the Suez Canal it may still pass again. The land is fertile, the climate is good, and all that is required is the gradual influx of an intelligent and industrious population, under a Government which is able to secure respect for law and order.

There are some who think that England should

look to her domestic concerns, and leave the rest of the world to manage its own affairs. I do not share these sentiments. There is a time in the life of a nation, as there is in the life of an individual, when it may be a duty to be engrossed in domestic affairs. This is usually the period of youth ; but for a nation like England, which is justly considered to be in the van of civilization, a nation unrivalled in her resources and rejoicing in free institutions, to withhold its sympathy and aid from poor and struggling nations, would be to proclaim its own downfall. It is impossible to retain power, either material or moral, unless it is used judiciously and turned to account. It has been the practice of many leading men of late years, both in this country and abroad, to cavil at doctrines of freedom, especially as applied to trade. If you want an illustration of the fallacy of such views, I think you may find one here. If protective doctrines prevailed in England, and if our object were to establish a Protective Customs' Alliance with Turkey for Syria and Asia Minor, as Germany and Austria have now done, then the nations of Europe might justly look upon our proceedings with suspicion and distrust. But it is just because England is free in her institutions and free in her trade, opening up her ports to the commerce of the world, that she is not distrusted, and that the other Powers of Europe can have neither inducement nor justification for impeding the work of regeneration in the East, which I

A Liberal
Foreign
Policy.

A Liberal
Foreign
Policy.

trust it may be the privilege of our nation to carry out. Transposing the *Imperium et Libertas* of our Premier, of England it may be truly said, "Because Liberty is her watchword, her Empire will not fail."

